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KING'S COLLEGE LECTURES  
ON  
IMMORTALITY



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LONDON  
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON PRESS, LTD.  
18, WARWICK SQUARE, LONDON, E.C. 4  
1920

ENCUENTRO AL 90. VÍDEO  
TRABAJOS DE MONA BOITA



## PREFACE

FOR several years it has been the custom to have courses of public lectures in Theology at King's College. One volume of lectures, "The Church of England, its Nature and its Future," has already been published, and the present book contains the lectures which were delivered in the Michaelmas Term of 1919. The Theological Faculty of King's College has conceived it to be a part of the function of a University to make the results of academic study available for that wide public which has an intelligent interest in intellectual and spiritual progress without possessing the leisure to pursue detailed investigation. There is no subject in which the close relation between research and educated opinion should be more jealously

## PREFACE

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guarded than that of Theology. And the benefit of such a relation will not be all on one side. The expert whose thoughts have been occupied with the things of the spirit cannot fail to gain a renewed sense of the momentous nature of the problems with which he deals when he is called upon to lay his conclusions before men and women who are immersed in the full stream of practical life. The large audiences which have listened to the lectures and the ready response which our invitation to take part in the courses has received from scholars in many universities are sufficient proof that the need which we have sought to meet is felt on both sides.

The lectures contained in this volume were not prepared with a view to publication and they are now printed in response to several requests that they might be brought together in a permanent form. They stand in the book practically as they were delivered. No attempt has been made to secure uniformity of standpoint or treatment, and each lecturer is respon-

## PREFACE

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sible only for his own contribution. The Editor ventured to suggest the subjects of the lectures with a view to securing that as many aspects of the subject as possible should be dealt with in the course. It would be too much to expect that the whole field should be covered in five lectures, and it will not escape the notice of the reader that several important topics have been passed over with slight mention or in silence. Thus the thorny question of the value of the evidence provided by psychical research has been touched on only incidentally by Dr. Brown. To have embarked upon a full consideration of this controversial matter would have required many more lectures. The metaphysical arguments for the immortality of the soul have been passed over because a profitable discussion of them seemed hardly possible without a degree of technicality which would have been inconvenient. The reader may, however, be reminded that some distinguished contemporary philosophers, among whom may be mentioned Dr. McTaggart and Professor

## PREFACE

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Howison, still hold that a valid metaphysical argument can be stated.

The hope of personal immortality is so closely bound up with our affections that it lends itself to credulity and superstition. On the other hand, there are minds which, in reaction from the illegitimate indulgence of the "will to believe," have persuaded themselves that the belief in personal survival is no part of pure religion. It is the aim of these lectures to assist in showing that faith in the future life is a rational faith and may be held all the more strongly when purged of some of the fancies which fear and hope have woven round it.

W. R. M.

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# CONTENTS

PREFACE . . . . .	PAGE v
THE RELIGIOUS VALUE OF THE IDEA OF A FUTURE LIFE . . . . .	3
By Rev. J. F. BETHUNE-BAKER, D.D., Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge	
THE ARGUMENT FROM THE EMOTIONS. . . . .	41
By Rev. Preb. A. CALDECOTT, D.D., D.Lit., Emeritus Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy	
THE MORAL ARGUMENT FOR PERSONAL IMMORTALITY . . . . .	77
By Very Rev. H. RASHDALL, D.D., Dean of Carlisle	
IMMORTALITY IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN PSYCHOLOGY. . . . .	128
By W. BROWN, M.A., D.Sc., M.D., Reader in Psychology in the University of London	
THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION TO THE CONCEPTION OF ETERNAL LIFE . . . . .	167
By Rev. H. M. RELTON, D.D., Vicar of Isle- worth, Lecturer in Dogmatic Theology	



THE RELIGIOUS VALUE OF THE  
IDEA OF A FUTURE LIFE

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## SYNOPSIS

The religious value of the idea of a future life cannot be duly estimated except in the light of the *data* and the arguments with which subsequent lecturers will deal.

A fundamental question for us is the relation between religious value and truth: the phrase "religious value."

One of the chief needs to-day is the due discernment of the religious significance of obsolete "religious" beliefs.

The question whether belief in a future life is one of the old beliefs that must be discarded, and, if so, whether it has religious value as pointing in the true direction.

Amendment of title of this lecture.

Christianity, as a religion, committed to belief in personal (individual) immortality. The whole Christian scheme of life, though socially conditioned, is individually conceived.

The view that belief in personal immortality "costs more than it is worth" examined. Not true if the belief tends to produce the highest forms of life here.

Three chief items of our valuation: (1) the worth of individual personality as ultimate reality; (2) the importance of this life and its experience, as contrasted with the "other-world" or ascetic theory of life (the "religious value" of the belief in future "judgment"); (3) the guarantee that the educational purpose of this life will be fulfilled and God's great experiment justified (for the traditional ideas of the final determination of personality in this life's experience and of everlasting punishment are not part of the pure text of the faith of the Gospel, and are inconsistent with the Christian idea of God: there are elements in the recorded teaching and thought of Jesus which belong merely to contemporary belief and were left by Him unrelated to His dominant ideas about God).

The "Christian" idea of a future life is determined by the "Christian" idea of God. The belief a construction of a long process of moral and spiritual experience. It gives coherence to the *data* of that experience. Its grounds in human nature are such that, if the universe is rational it is a theory so securely based as to become convincing.



## THE RELIGIOUS VALUE OF THE IDEA OF A FUTURE LIFE

When I undertook, not, indeed, without some misgivings, the task of preparing the first lecture of this course, I had not fully considered the subject assigned me in relation to the other lectures of the course. When I had, I was driven to the conclusion that it ought to have been the last rather than the first. And if it had been the last, then I think perhaps there would have been no need of it.

Our subject is “the religious value of the idea of a future life,” and it seems to me that the other lectures prepare the way for any proper estimate of values, and that without the *data* with which they will supply us we cannot form a judgment. For those who will speak to us of the argument from the emotions, from the

## IMMORTALITY

---

moral consciousness of man, and from his psychic nature as it is known and inferred to-day, may be expected to present to us a chain of evidence strong enough to take us farther than probability and to raise a reasonable hypothesis to the level of conviction. A belief which is seen to have its grounds in the very constitution of man and to be raised and purified as he himself rises higher in the scale of life—a belief about his own destiny which is the outcome of the general experience of mankind through its long adventurous history—is far more securely based than most beliefs of men. In stating their various arguments our later lecturers will be disclosing the religious value of the idea of a future life, and I cannot avoid to some extent encroaching on their ground, even though to-day we are not supposed to be dealing with facts at all.

To-day our proper business is not with proof or probabilities or evidence at all. We are to keep in the high but misty realm of ideas and values ; that is, in an individualistic and personal

## RELIGIOUS VALUE OF THE IDEA

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atmosphere. We simply set before ourselves a particular idea and ask what is its "religious value." We seem to suggest that an idea may have religious value whether it is true or not : and that, I think, is the first question to which we ought to address ourselves.

What do we mean by "religious" and how are we to measure "value"? We need not attempt to define the words too closely : but I think we must rule out the vaguer senses and regard Religion, leaving the question of its origin on one side, as offering us with sanctions that we recognise a theory of life, assuring us what life means, directing us to its purpose, setting ideals before us, bidding us, if we would attain our highest good, do this or that or be such or such. In a Religion, accordingly, any particular idea would have a "value" corresponding to its place in the whole scheme of the religion and its fitness to enhance its authority or to strengthen its appeal.

Such a religion, if it rested on sanctions that commanded confidence, might be effective

## IMMORTALITY

---

without the thought of a future life. We should have to consider how much more or less effective it would become if on its other beliefs was imposed belief in a future life. Or, in the case of a religion that already included that belief, we should have to consider how the loss of the belief would affect it.

There are some ideas that are only tolerable on condition that you never attempt to state them clearly, and others only as long as you do not bring them into relation to anything that you know. Is the idea of a future life one of these ?

Let us look at the question for a moment from another angle.

No historical religion, I suppose, is entirely free from ideas that are survivals from the time of its origin, or later periods of its history which have ceased to form part of the living faith of its professors to-day. They are as it were mere date-marks, and we have to get them out of the text into the margin. Often in such cases it is possible to see that the idea which is

## RELIGIOUS VALUE OF THE IDEA

---

no longer a current belief is yet a representation (a kind of picture) of a conviction that is still held—something we believe to be true at the core ; and we are right in pointing to that conviction as the “ religious value ” of the old belief that has died out and been discarded. We do not hold the old belief ; but if the conviction which we detect underlying it—of which in the whole scheme of the religion it was the expression—is still ours, we can feel ourselves the spiritual descendants of the men who held it, though the actual expression they gave it may in its literal sense be false to us. They were expressing a religious conviction in the way appropriate to their intellectual environment. We should express the same religious conviction in some other way appropriate to the general knowledge of to-day. Our expression is for us the actual equivalent of theirs for them.

This use of the phrase “ religious value ” is so convenient—indeed, I think, indispensable—to us to-day, if we are to place ourselves right

## IMMORTALITY

---

in relation to the past, and make a true adjustment of modern knowledge and old religious beliefs, that I cannot bring myself to use the phrase in any other sense.

Do we then suggest, by the title of our subject, that the idea of a future life is one of these discarded beliefs out of which we have to extract its religious significance? We must get this clear, I think. We can do so by a distinction. Some beliefs which have been held about the future life no doubt we must discard, and there have been some in which it would be sheer waste of ingenuity to attempt to detect religious value. But the idea itself of a future life is for me at least so integral a part of Religion that if I had to discard it I could not feel that I could speak of Religion at all. In spite of thinkers and writers who claim the word in other senses—not simply by way of analogy or metaphor—I must repudiate for myself the idea of Religion that does not look beyond this life and point to an abiding reality to which human experience is related, and—I must

## RELIGIOUS VALUE OF THE IDEA

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add at once—in which the subjects of that experience are included, for “experience” cannot be apart from persons.

The idea of a future life is thus in my judgment vital to the idea of Religion. It is one which no religion that has used it can ever outgrow without ceasing to be a religion. Of course, we all have the Christian Religion in mind. We need not treat of any other. Suppose you remove from the Christian Religion belief in a future life.

I could not, indeed, make St. Paul's words my own when he wrote to his converts at Corinth “If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most pitiable.” I could not make his words my own, that is to say, if he was not merely using a rhetorical appeal but actually meant that only on the assumption of a future life could life here in reliance on the ideas and the ideals of Christ, under the illusion of discipleship and living communion with Him, be justified. Rather I should hold that it was better to have hoped in vain than never to have

## IMMORTALITY

---

hoped at all ; and I should wish to maintain that if there be no future life for the much-tried sons of men, yet the theory of life which Jesus taught and enacted is the theory on which the highest values of life in the world as it is are realised—is the theory moulded by which the spirit of man and human society as a whole will attain to its highest good. To have conceived it would be one of the highest achievements of the spirit of man. The man who so lived this life would not be pitiable but supremely blessed ; and, if there is no future life, human society ordered on those lines, a society, that is, of perfected human personalities, would be the reality of the illusion of Heaven. The Christian Religion would go ; but it would leave behind it as a possession for ever the noblest pattern of human life that ever entered into the heart of man. The illusion would have marked a stage in the history of the progress of mankind ; and men, who in the wisdom of a later age scornfully rejected it, would owe to it an imperishable ideal of life in



## RELIGIOUS VALUE OF THE IDEA

---

the world, of personality and fellowship, which the illusion created. It would be due to its influence in the past that, without it, they were still able to live "justly, generously, and beautifully."

Once established, it stands above all else as the warrant of individual worth, setting forward communion with God as the goal for every man born into the world; and it becomes the surest safeguard, I would not say of morality, but of ethical endeavour.

In saying that, we state, I think, in general terms the value of the Christian idea of a future life. You see I have slipped in the word "Christian" before "idea," and left out the word "religious" before "value." The process by which we come to this amendment of our subject is, I think, instructive, and the new terms express what we want to consider.

But again, before we go further, and attempt to draw out the main items of our valuation, we have to define the "Christian" idea of a future life. We are to have a whole lecture on this

## IMMORTALITY

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subject, but some points we must define at once.

By the "Christian" idea of a future life, I mean the idea of personal immortality in the common sense of the permanence of individual consciousness, the individual remaining in the future life as a subject of experience with memory of past experience, if and so far as memory is needed to secure his identity among the host of other personalities to which his own personality is related, and the continuity of his experience. (We forget much in this life.) To this idea Christianity, as I understand it, is irrevocably committed. I must enlarge a little on this point. Is Christianity really so committed?

There are some who claim that Christians may keep an open mind on this question and think it possible that individuality is "only the limitation of life, not the expression of it," and so that the survival after death,—the permanence of life,—in which they believe, may not be individual. It may be that "the life which has

## RELIGIOUS VALUE OF THE IDEA

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been, as it were, bottled up in our individualities, is released, and goes back into the main stream.” I quote the words of one who has published his views.<sup>1</sup> I know there are others who, as one wrote to me, “earnestly hope that ‘personal immortality’ will not be made a test-question in the future.”

We have not time to examine the question fully now, but we must give a few minutes to it. I would not cavil at the phrase “the main stream of life,” although, like “the soul of the universe,” it suggests at the best a pantheistic thought. Nor would I say that it was merely an abstraction whose only reality was to be found in the innumerable individual lives that compose the stream ; for I believe that somehow there is a “soul” of a people or of a church that is greater than the sum total of all the individual souls of which at the moment it is made up. Nor again could any Christian quarrel with the idea that limitations beset his

<sup>1</sup> K. Lake, “The Stewardship of Faith” (pp. 139-142), Christophers, 1915.

## IMMORTALITY

---

life and personality here from which he only escapes by being immersed in a larger life and personality than his. But is he allowed to think of his individuality as extinguished? Is that what we mean when we sing

Till in the ocean of thy love  
We lose ourselves in heaven above?

No doubt, the conception of the Beatific Vision approximates closely to the idea of the absorption of individuality in the main stream of life; and the highest stage of mystic experience implies what would generally be deemed to be the loss of individual consciousness. God is to be all in all—that is surely a “Christian” thought: yet the “all in all” (*πάντα ἐν ᾧ σιν*) is a plural phrase—the “all” remains a plurality. The Christian God is a Unity that embraces a Trinity.

Let us look at the question on the social side as regards this life. There is no idea more Christian than the idea that the final end of the historic process of the world is the establishment of a perfected human society which will manifest

## RELIGIOUS VALUE OF THE IDEA

---

in its order the perfect life of men on earth : the solidarity will be complete and the one spirit all pervasive. "Individualism," as we use the word, will have ceased to be.

Though you will not live to see this end, yet if in your own generation you have made your proper contribution to it ; if you have added to the volume of social consciousness of the kind the idea requires for its fulfilment ; then—in relation to the end proposed—you have achieved the immediate purpose of your life on earth. You have identified yourself with the main stream of life ; and, though your individual consciousness has ceased, you share in the process and its consummation.

But the Christian ideal of human society is hardly at home with this conception of a stream of life. It is more adequately represented by the image of the body that functions as a whole, yet has the same care for all its members. No member has life apart from the body : only in contributing its proper service to the whole does it realise its proper end : but each member

## IMMORTALITY

---

is necessary to the full life of the body. None can be used up, as it were, in the process, and cast aside, if the ideal is to be realised.

Now images are static and ideals are final—the time element is excluded: but image and ideal alike must apply to each age and stage in the movement at once social and personal that we call the historic process of the world. And the image and the ideal mean that, while he must acquire a social consciousness and learn his place in the whole, no individual who is an agent in the process can ever cease to have his individual value. A corporate or social immortality is only the background or setting of individual immortality. The fact seems to be that the whole Christian scheme of life, though socially conditioned, is individually conceived. The Christian idea of Incarnation is contrasted with the idea that God only discloses Himself in the human race as a whole. The theologians did, indeed, come to conceive of humanity as a substance which could be assumed in its entirety: but the original

## RELIGIOUS VALUE OF THE IDEA

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conception, which was formed not in the study but on the plane of actual life and history, was of an incarnation in an individual man. It is not the annihilation, but the perfection, of individual life that is the Christian counterpart of the Christian doctrine of Incarnation. The individual life finds its perfection in conscious participation in the life of God—as Augustine wrote, “Cum inhaesero tibi ex omni me, uiua erit uita mea, tota plena te” (Conf. X, xxviii). “When with my whole being I adhere to Thee (have become one with Thee), my life will be really alive, being entirely full of Thee.” But it is still “my” life.

The great paradox of Christian ethics is that a man finds himself by losing what he thought was himself. The ideal social order is a fellowship of persons made by that process. It does not sacrifice the individual to the Society but enables him to realise himself. It may be useful, for some purposes, to distinguish between individuality and personality, but the only Christian distinction would be the dis-

## IMMORTALITY

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inction between the potential and the actual.<sup>1</sup> The individual is the inchoate person. There is no change of subject in the experience by which the individual becomes a person. He does not lose, or cease to be, what we must call "himself."

If the Beatific Vision and the Unitive Life of the Mystics really denoted the annihilation of individual consciousness, as Christians we should have to maintain that the state was pathological and the idea not Christian. It would say "there's an end of me." I might, of course, sometimes wish there was to be. But the Christian Religion and—I feel sure we must add—any Christian philosophy of life agree in saying, "there's never an end of you": "you are an end in yourself": "you are 'necessary' to the whole scheme of things." In the Beatific Vision the soul retains its identity and consciousness, even when it has

<sup>1</sup> I do not fully understand Mr. C. C. J. Webb's Gifford Lectures "God and Personality" (George Allen and Unwin, 1918), but a distinction of this kind suggested itself to me as I read them.



## RELIGIOUS VALUE OF THE IDEA

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attained its utmost capacity for fellowship with God and may be said to be "re-absorbed" in God.

The idea of a future life, then, with which we are concerned, is one that connotes personal immortality in the sense of the persistence of individual selves, of every human individual, in a life beyond the life lived in the world.

What, then, is the value of this idea?

A distinguished Professor of Psychology<sup>1</sup> has lately declared that in his opinion this belief in personal immortality "costs more than it is worth." He means, I understand, that personal immortality can only be at the sacrifice of possibilities of greater moment, values of higher worth. If the individual person is to abide, then human thought and imagination can reach to something beyond the ultimate attainment; it can conceive a reality richer in content and nobler in quality than is compatible with the persistence of individual selves.

<sup>1</sup> J. H. Leuba, "The Belief in God and Immortality," (Sherman French & Co., Boston, 1916).

## IMMORTALITY

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I doubt if there can be a reality richer and nobler than is compatible with "personal immortality." Our lecturer on "immortality in the light of modern psychology" may have some guidance to give us on this point. But if there is, I doubt still more whether it is right to say that the belief in personal immortality "costs more than it is worth." The question at once arises whether the belief does not yet point in the right direction.

We know that this Christian belief in personal immortality is itself the construction of a long process of moral, that is "personal," experience—the stages and the circumstances of which we can in large measure trace through Hebrew religion, prophecy, and apocalyptic. If we must ever regard it as marking only a stage on the long way to Reality that the human mind has to travel, a construction that must be destroyed in order that a higher reconstruction may take its place: if, therefore, it is only one of those illusions that gladden the heart of a

## RELIGIOUS VALUE OF THE IDEA

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day in the life of mankind, and are gone : if this is so, then, though there is to be a higher development and the belief does not correspond with ultimate reality, the criterion of its religious value must be found in the answer to the question, Does the belief, so far as it is really directive of human activities and purpose, work in the right direction ? Does it set before men an ideal of life, a goal, which, though not final, is yet, as it were, on the straight road to finality ? as the climber in an unknown country has to make for the pass, or the highest ridge or peak in sight, in order to get to the real mountain top that is out of sight and may be unguessed beyond.

Is the idea of personal immortality one that fosters and stimulates the highest capacities of man, of individuals and of the race, leading to the richest achievement in this world—the purest and highest forms of life here ? If so, unless the world and human life are utterly irrational, the idea is in any event obviously of high religious value.

## IMMORTALITY

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And so, at last, we may begin to try to draw up our summary valuation.

What does the belief do for us ?

An old friend, whom I asked a few days ago how the idea of a future life affected her, replied, " It makes me much more cheerful." To my second question, " Does it make you more virtuous ? " the answer was " Not a bit." Another, younger, said it had no influence on her, and the same answer was given by a man of mature years and experience.

I should class all answers of this kind with those which were obtained by the American professor to whom I referred a moment ago, when without warning he put a paper before his students with a number of questions on the subject which they were to answer on the spot. They were all just beginning the study of psychology and philosophy, at a period of life when religious beliefs are commonly held at second-hand, or else are vague and shadowy. They were sufficiently interested in the affairs of this life, and it is not surprising to learn that

## RELIGIOUS VALUE OF THE IDEA

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their valuation of those interests was not, so far as they were aware, affected by the question of a future life. I do not rate this kind of statistical evidence high. They probably had no doubt at all that they were real persons. They did not know that belief in immortality stood for belief in their own personal reality. They were also asked about a personal God, and the Professor himself suggests that disbelief in a personal God to-day may be the outcome of a high, rather than of a low, moral and spiritual estimate of life: it "is as likely as not," he says, "to point to idealistic views of life." Yet it is the belief that the ultimate reality is in some sense personal that alone allows us to speak of values without talking nonsense, for values and idealistic views of life are the creatures of persons. We must estimate the value of the idea as an idea, independently of the question to what extent men and women are consciously affected by it; and we must not forget the immense influence on us of our social heredity in building up which the idea

## IMMORTALITY

---

of a future life has played an incalculable, but certainly formative, part.

What, then, does the belief do for us? It is we ourselves who are concerned, and it is in relation to ourselves that our estimate must be made. The first item I should enumerate is this. The idea of personal immortality gives us an extraordinary sense of our own importance. If we are personally immortal we belong to the ultimate stuff of reality. Whatever else about our life may be illusion and vanish away, we are real. However transitory some of our experiences may actually be; however faint and fugitive their effects upon us may seem to be; yet we, the subjects of them, abide. Once in being we can never escape it. Each one of us, who is a centre or subject of this human experience, is partly made by it and partly makes himself; and what he is made or makes of himself in this life, he will be in a life beyond the grave. Such a belief corresponds with the belief that God is at once immanent in the whole world process, so that it is in some way His

## RELIGIOUS VALUE OF THE IDEA

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own experience, and yet transcends it. To man, immersed in this world's experience, yet dimly conscious that he can raise himself above it, it is an assurance that this transcendental consciousness is rooted in reality.

This is to assign profound importance to experience here. We must emphasise this second item in our estimate, for belief in a future life has often been made to justify indifference to the affairs of this life. Under its ægis "other worldliness" and the ascetic ideal, that denies ethical worth to the interests and activities of ordinary life in the world, have played havoc with human nature and made a rational view of the universe impossible. But this kind of belief in a future life, that disparages the present life and takes away the zest of living now—a belief which curtails the range of human interests and restricts the exercise of the capacities of men in the development of the resources of the world in which they are set—this belief, that underlies the antithesis between "things secular" and

## IMMORTALITY

---

“things religious,” is a perversion of the genuinely Christian thought “*mors janua vitae*,” according to which life here is a preparation, not for death, but for the life of the world beyond. *Vita praeformatio*, not “*mortis*” but, *vitae*. But it is life here in the thick of the fight that qualifies for the life beyond.

The Dean of St. Paul’s has told us lately “it is other-worldliness that can alone transform the world.” I am not sure that he meant what I mean : but the epigram puts the point I am trying to make ; for you can only transform the world of human experience by acting on it and in it. You must make it not less but more real than it seems. You can only bring human life to its proper level by actively participating in it as a whole. That is what the doctrine of the Incarnation means. The idea that this life is a preparation for a life beyond—a life of incalculable range and content—attributes to this life and its normal experience an incomparable dignity and value. For it relates all



## RELIGIOUS VALUE OF THE IDEA

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this normal experience to the experience that is to be : the seen to the unseen : the temporal to eternity. It insists—this idea of personal immortality—on the continuity of the two stages of life, because the person who lives, who experiences, is one and the same. What the life beyond for each one of us will be it does not say, but it does say what its quality will be. We ourselves determine that.

Here we discover the religious value of the idea of judgment, which is inherent in the idea of the resurrection of the body and so in the Christian idea of the future life. The future life is not independent of this life, which is the only door into it. The personality formed by this world's experience may be good or evil. It is true that we may not transfer the conditions of this life to the next. But the suggestion of judgment and the resurrection of the body is that in that life each person makes his own conditions. He himself is the total resultant of his experience here; and his character, his personality, will find there its true appro-

## IMMORTALITY

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priate environment, its adequate expression. Can the importance of experience here be more emphatically affirmed than it is in this idea, "life's business being just the terrible choice"? We cannot wonder if some who believed it desired to restrict as narrowly as possible the innumerable opportunities of choice that ordinary life in the world affords, even if by doing so they must enter into eternal life with one eye instead of two, and be only the ghosts of the persons they might have become.

I have said that, in considering the Christian idea of a future life, we cannot parley with the idea with which some metaphysicians are ready to play, that personality is something to which some human beings never attain, and accordingly that no future life awaits them. We might dispose of some ecclesiastical problems and some theological puzzles by this idea. But at what a cost! The price we should pay would be the complete collapse of the rationality of this life as an ethical process. There is no

## RELIGIOUS VALUE OF THE IDEA

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religious value in the idea of a future life unless it is for the evil as well as for the good, for the unformed as well as for the developed personality.

And so we may note the third item in our valuation.

A distinguished, but rather cranky, bishop in the eighteenth century argued that Moses was divinely inspired to say nothing about a future life, so as not to detract men's attention from the idea that their fortunes in this life were in exact correspondence with their deserts, as measured, of course, by the tabus and standards of their religion. From this idea Hebrew thought had travelled far before it could receive the revaluation of earthly fortunes that Christians discovered in the life of Jesus—of which the doctrine of the Incarnation and “the cross of Christ” are the symbol. Yet, while insisting on the readjustment in the life of the world to come of all the misconcorrespondences of this world, the recorded teaching of Jesus and the main current of Christian teaching since treat

## IMMORTALITY

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the personality that survives as finally determined here, and everlasting Hell has been the counterpart of everlasting Heaven in the covenanted lease of life. I suppose it is because the modern world rejects the condition of Hell that it has become doubtful about its claim to Heaven, and is ready to rely merely on social sanctions and their grounds in human nature itself.

There are two great enemies to-day to faith in another life. One is "other-worldliness" of the ascetic type, against which is ranged the whole force of an informed reason that cannot tolerate the idea of a God who has set man in a world of absorbing interests only to wean him from them—an idea which for centuries has posed as Christian and is still represented in many of our hymns and prayers and institutions. The other is the traditional idea of eternal punishment, which outrages the sense of justice and the ethical consciousness that the Gospel itself has created.

To-day we are in the position that we not

## RELIGIOUS VALUE OF THE IDEA

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only do not believe these things, but we do not even feel that we ought to believe them. Many are sure they ought *not* to believe them.

So it is worth noting that for all the stress that is laid on the decisiveness of this life, it is always as the fulfilment and completion of it that the future is conceived. "The best is yet to be."

The static and catastrophic elements in our traditional conceptions have tended to blind us to the fact that Purpose is the dominant idea of the Christian theory of life; that Purpose is evolutionary and dynamic; and that for Christian teleology the end is determined by Love, the Love that is perfected by experience and then only can cast out fear. It is not really a Christian idea of the future life that makes death the end of that educative experience. Rather it is the Christian idea that there is "no end to learning"—"Man has forever."

It was as the idea of God grew fuller and

## IMMORTALITY

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nobler that the ideas of the Hebrew prophets about human personality were purified and enriched. If man is *capax Dei*, made in the image of God, our estimates of God and of man must correspond. The consciousness of communion with the Father God, which to a unique degree is characteristic of the historical Jesus, is the setting of His estimate of man and human destiny. That communion once established could not be broken ; and, if the purpose of life is to be fulfilled, man who is *capax Dei* must attain to God. The potential capacity for communion must become actual. "What is the chief end of man ?" Answer, "To glorify God and enjoy Him for ever."

The scholars who have traced the history of Hebrew thought tell us that Hebrew eschatology remained on a low level after Hebrew theology reached its zenith.<sup>1</sup> In like manner probably in our Lord's own teaching, certainly as it has been transmitted, and in common "Christian "

<sup>1</sup> Cf. R. H. Charles, "Immortality" (The Drew Lecture, 1912), Clarendon Press, Oxford.

## RELIGIOUS VALUE OF THE IDEA

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thought ever since, there remain eschatological conceptions which cannot be reconciled with the central idea of the all-powerful God of Love, whose purpose for mankind must be fulfilled. In our Lord's teaching as recorded attention is concentrated on the issues of this stage of existence. Eschatological conceptions which were current at the time are freely used, unamended, to support the new valuation of human life. That is to say, the Christian valuation is set in an old unchristianised frame. The new conception of personality is painted by a master-hand, but only on the middle of a canvas that contains old pictures of the future left by him as they were. These old pictures of the future are among the date-marks, of which I spoke, that are not part of the pure text of the Faith of the Gospel and must be got out of the text into the margin as soon as possible. The new wine of Christianity as a matter of fact was put into old skins, and it did not always burst them. Some of them were tough and are still in use. It is not Antichrist, but the

## IMMORTALITY

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Spirit of Christ Himself, that is letting some of the new wine out at last.

The idea of an “eternity of weal or woe” irrevocably fixed for every human being by the general trend of his life in this world has had educational value. It is, indeed, chiefly the static or quantitative view of eternity and of rewards and punishments that makes this idea seem irrational or unjust. But as these are men’s measures, and life is realised by us in close relation to the clock, and we must trust our rational and moral nature, we do well to remind ourselves that the “Christian” idea of a future life must correspond with the paramount “Christian” idea of reality, of God, of His relation to the world and men, His purpose. Christian Faith cannot conceive of the ultimate failure of His great experiment in the production of persons with free-wills in some way like Himself. Christian Faith believes that this daring experiment has already in countless instances in human experience achieved results that promise full success, and



## RELIGIOUS VALUE OF THE IDEA

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it is obliged by its very conception of God to keep open in a future life opportunities for the completion of the process, even in cases in which this life's experience seems to afford no guarantee that the purpose will be accomplished.

This Christian conception of God does not allow even one per cent. of failures—it is not enough to have ninety-nine sheep out of the flock of a hundred safe in the fold. It does not admit of the extinction either of an incipient or of a stunted or warped or ill-grown personality. It requires that all should come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. The idea of a future life is, therefore, full of hope. The dualism of good and evil persons cannot be final. The new life must offer a new start. “On earth the broken arcs, in heaven the perfect round.”

It is the conception of God as holy, all-powerful, and loving that determines the value—the meaning—of the Christian idea of a future life, because it determines the Christian

## IMMORTALITY

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idea of man and his destiny. And the arguments with which subsequent lectures will deal—and I have therefore as much as possible avoided—will be themselves, as I have said, the best statements of the value of the idea of personal immortality, if the cosmic process is rational. For if the imperative demand of the affections and the will is finally balked, then indeed man can conceive a good higher than reality, and the creature would have outgrown the Creator. To these facts of man's moral and spiritual experience, to his steadily developing sense of the sovereignty of moral and spiritual values, of the supreme worth of personality, and yet of the contradictions and incongruities, the incapacities and restrictions, to which he is subject here, the idea that the real business of this life is the training and making of free personal spirits, that will only find full scope in a life beyond this world, gives coherence: and an idea that, if it does not entirely explain, yet gives coherence to human experience—the otherwise baffling facts of the individual and

## RELIGIOUS VALUE OF THE IDEA

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social history of mankind—appeals as much to the reason as to the affections and the will, and is worthy to engage the whole personality of a man, to be transformed from reasonable hypothesis to conviction, and so to become the Faith by which he walks.



THE ARGUMENT FROM THE  
EMOTIONS

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## SYNOPSIS

**Preliminary.** The Future Life here considered is not for individuals in solitude, but in society, and in the presence of God; the nature of Man is regarded in its ideal.

**I.** (a) Affections and Desires in ideal range. (b) The superior claim of the Feelings on the positive side of life, health, and enjoyment, over those on the negative side. (c) The possibility of Order in the life of Feeling.

**II.** The insatiability of Desire, based upon the expansiveness of Personality.

**III.** Application of the above to the Hope of a Future Life.

**IV.** Comparison of some Feelings evoked by expectation of Future Life and of Annihilation, respectively: Hope and Fear; Admiration and Contempt; Love and Hate.

**V.** The question of an Inferno.

**VI.** Summing up. Indication of further support from the implications of the Love of God.

## THE ARGUMENT FROM THE EMOTIONS

My thesis is the rightful share of our Feelings in awakening and sustaining the belief in a Future Life.

So great has been the distrust of Feeling in philosophical circles and so reserved the trust in it by common opinion that anyone who comes forward to defend it finds himself in a minority—almost a contemptible minority. To declare that religious beliefs in general and this belief in particular depend in great part upon our Affections is to invite the reproach of being a reactionary or obscurantist who will not face the adverse results of intellectual enquiry. But this is not at all the position of the writer, who has a large degree of satisfaction with the intellectual and moral arguments but

## IMMORTALITY

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is concerned to ask for fresh attention to what the life of Feeling also has to show. The disfavour into which support from this quarter has fallen obliges a defender to offer the conception of the general nature of Feeling and its place in human character upon which his vindication rests.

The argument will be presented within an area marked by two boundaries :—

(i) The Future Life as that of individuals dwelling in fellowship with one another in the presence of God. For a life as solitary inhabitants of eternity there may be some argument, but this does not greatly interest most of us, and consideration of it is left to those to whom it appears important.

(ii) The procedure is of a philosophical kind. It is not limited to Science as the total of our observations as to fact, it includes reference to the ideal of human nature : not only what man actually feels and desires, but to feelings and desires of man at his ideally best. Our question is not only, Do men's



## ARGUMENT FROM THE EMOTIONS

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feelings lead them to expect a future life? but whether or not men's feelings *ought* to lead to that expectation when they are considered in their true and right place in the ideal character and constitution of the Soul.

I. The implication of the Affections and Desires.

(a) The primary appeal is to Affections, the secondary to Desires as suspended or unsatisfied Affections. Every particular Affection, as distinguished from an objectless mood, arises *sub specie boni* : the miser's stupid greed for money as well as the patriot's ardour for fatherland. At first there are no Affections except for actually existing objects presented to consciousness : here therefore the presence of an Affection is a sign that its object is or has been in existence. The desire for food proves that food has been enjoyed before, and therefore that such a thing as food exists. But in man imagination soon begins to *construct* objects, and Affections towards these arise, and so the presence of an Affection ceases to be a

## IMMORTALITY

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proof of the existence of its object in the perceived world. The minds of men and women have constructed imaginary worlds in addition to the small world of actuality. But if this unchartered imagination were all, it would appear that the rise of imagination leads us away from reality, and so is no privilege but a source of illusion. There is, however, a higher use of imagination recognised by common sense and approved by philosophy. It is deemed that imagination can be orderly and consistent and thus can open out views into new reaches of the Cosmos ; and the varied Affections attaching to this ideal world constitute additions to the emotional experiences attaching to the world of actuality.<sup>1</sup> In short, the pre-

<sup>1</sup> There is good ground for believing that there is an important difference between the cognitive and the emotional phases of mental life in respect to vividness and force. *Sensations*, arising peripherally, attain a greater vividness than *ideas* which arise centrally. But this is not the case with feelings : the pleasure attached to an ideal can be as vivid as that attached to a perceived fact, and even more vivid, for it can prevail in a contest between them.

## ARGUMENT FROM THE EMOTIONS

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sence of some Affections testifies to the existence of their objects in the actual world, and the presence of others to objects in an ideal world. And Man finds values in both those worlds ; compelled *ab extra* to accept the world presented to him, he is also constrained by inner necessity to assign high values to his ideal world and the affections which appertain to that.

(b) Feeling is bi-polar ; marked by a fundamental contrast of *quality*: that of pleasure and pain ; of enjoyment or suffering. It is important to note the connection of these with life and reality. I am here going to assume that it is the enjoyment side of Feeling that is concomitant with reality, and the painful side with subtraction from reality. The one is the mark of life and health ; the other of the withdrawal of these. Both are psychical facts, of course ; but their sources differ in this fundamental way. I am quite unable to accept the priority of pain ; it appears to me to arise when obstructions block the proper processes of life, and warns us against continuing in that direc-

## IMMORTALITY

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tion. Enjoyment indicates the presence of values ; Pain points to non-values or to loss. Or as it has been put by John Grote, Good is of the first intention, Bad is a second intention. It is enjoyable Feeling that has the primary right, both for itself, and administratively in the economy of the heart.

(c) The two positions just set out obtain a general assent except in the mind of India and in some phases of the European mind marked by positivism or pessimism or by both. But the position I wish now to establish will be likely to meet with surprise and incredulity. I contend for the assignment of law and order to the Emotional life. This presents itself, I know, as a paradox. I remember the impatient exclamation of William James that he would as soon apply himself to study the variations of the surface of a New Hampshire farm as the complications of the emotions. Nevertheless I believe that law is effective in every variation. I know the instability and inconstancy of feelings, but I know also of much stability and

## ARGUMENT FROM THE EMOTIONS

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much constancy ; and I believe that law is carried out in both the stability and the instability if we have patience to trace it.

We have not only the cry of Pascal that the heart has its *reasons* , that is, its *orderliness*, but the confidence of his great intellectualist contemporary Spinoza at the opening of his study of the Emotions that they are amenable to law.

But we should also draw upon that reference to *ideals* which I took as my second point. I do not limit my expectation of order to the emotional lives that have already been lived, but I have in view the orderliness of the *ideal* character of man : rejoicing at the same time that observation discloses so many examples of well-ordered minds ; though it is certainly true that, as the Stoics thought of the wise man, the perfect man of Feeling remains an ideal only.

It is impossible here to set forth a conspectus of a mind well-ordered in its emotional composition. It must suffice to indicate that the Feelings are in ascending levels of worth and

## IMMORTALITY

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importance, beginning with the simple feelings attached to the simpler impulses, activities, and sensations, rising through many complexities to the level where we voluntarily and autonomously pursue Goodness, Truth, and Beauty; where Admiration and Adoration are as sunshine in our souls.

Obversely, we are guided in our enquiry by the correlative conception of *Disorder*. As any constituent of the body politic may arrogate to itself an undue influence and obstruct the healthy working of the nation as a whole, so among the Feelings one may obtain an illegitimate monopoly, or at least an influence out of proportion to its merit. The capacity of lower Feelings for rising to the intensity of Passion is at the root of the distrust, and even despair, of obtaining order that marks the Asceticism so prominent in the philosophies and religions of mankind. Yet in spite of the wide prevalence of Disorder the brightest and healthiest minds of humanity stand faithful to the ideal. Order is the proper right of the Soul in its Feeling as

## ARGUMENT FROM THE EMOTIONS

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in its thought. As for the method of obtaining order, it must be positive and not negative. Not by the suppression of the wrongful but by the introduction and fostering of the rightful claimants to power and place. Coercion is no remedy here, or in political society : inhibition of the bad comes by means of substitution of the good. And in aid of this we have a right to trust to the formation of stable and permanent dispositions : for rightful claimants as much as for wrongful ; and, I hold, a greater right.

In support of my advocacy of our right to set *Order* as a guiding star in our conception of the Emotional life as well as of the Rational life I am happy in being able to refer to a notable contribution to this area of Psychology by an English student, Mr. Alexander Shand ("Foundations of Character," Macmillan, 1914). So far does he go in following belief in natural law in the life of Feeling that for only a part of the field he is able to enunciate no fewer than 144 "laws" or regularities of operation. And though this may seem to be almost

## IMMORTALITY

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pedantic in its detail, the reader will find Mr. Shand's patient and sober treatment likely to shake his preconceived prejudices that the Feelings are a jungle of which Science can make little or nothing, and which therefore can claim no respect from philosophy.

II. So far for Feelings or Affections connected with objects, either actual or ideal. But we very frequently experience ungratified Affections, obstructed or suspended because of the absence of their objects, or outrunning all objects as yet experienced. This is the state named Desire, as I propose to use the term.

A fact of primary importance about Desire is its *insatiability*: as life enlarges and knowledge extends Desire not only keeps pace but ever projects itself in advance : we have, as Browning said, "an unmeasured thirst for good." In the first stage, the content of a Desire should correspond simply with the Affection of which it is the prospectively regarding form : just that, and no more. It seeks the repetition of its original, and is, within the measure of its



## ARGUMENT FROM THE EMOTIONS

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strength, a sign that the original has been perceived or thought of. While the Affection is enjoying satisfaction, Desire has no place : there comes a period of satiety, and attention passes elsewhere. Later, a remembrance of the satisfaction recurs and the Affection revives in the form of Desire. If the desire is simply for a repetition of the previous experience all is straightforwardly accounted for. But if the desire is for something greater and better, not only for an old *bonum* but for a new *melius*, a problem arises. The situation is parallel to that of the rise of Creative Imagination going beyond Perception.

Why is not the mind content with perceptions and memories ? Why does it insist upon adding thereto by creative imagination ? Similarly, why should Desire outrun the range of simple repetition ? Why this unappeasable longing for more and better ?

Some explanation is provided when we take into account unconscious mind and its mass of desires not based on conscious experience ; but

## IMMORTALITY

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there is more than this. It is plain that we are here in face of the *Expansibility of Individuality*: the inherent tendency of a human personality to grow and increase and improve. The limitation within which it finds itself at any given moment is not fixed and final, and it is itself aware of this.<sup>1</sup>

I cast my anchor of Desire  
Deep in unknown Eternity :  
Nor ever let my spirit tire  
With looking for *what is to be*.

Now if this expansion is vain and futile ; if the Soul's desires are increasing while the world remains fixed in its capacity for satisfying desire, the situation is irrational in the extreme.<sup>2</sup> Man cannot be properly related to such a

<sup>1</sup> Newman : "Towards any finite object the heart runs out only at one door : it is not the expanding of the whole man." (Sermon on "The Thought of God.")

<sup>2</sup> C. C. J. Webb : "Surely we must admit that a world which can produce a hunger and thirst after righteousness and yet nowhere contains the means of satisfying them is a world fundamentally incoherent and irrational." ("God and Personality," p. 189.)

And Dr. Bosanquet holds that this expansibility is not confined to the leaders of humanity, but is a property of the common mind. ("Individuality and Value," p. 377.)

## ARGUMENT FROM THE EMOTIONS

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Cosmos : philosophy sinks defeated in her endeavour to bring the Soul and the world into working relation. To bring them into relation we have to think that the insatiability of Desire in the Soul corresponds to inexhaustible richness of the Cosmos. And if the known Cosmos is limited and unplastic, then man himself must become creative, and build beyond those limits a new world for himself.

This is, in general terms, the Argument from Desire.

III. What we have reached is this : Affections prove the existence of objects, actual or ideal ; the enjoyment quality of Affections belongs to them as positive and primary constituents of life ; they are capable of order ; and from them spring Desires which extend beyond the limits of experienced satisfactions.

We may now apply these general truths to the specific Desire for a Future Life. This expression I am taking to mean, as stated at the outset, the continuance of ourselves in at least as high individuality as we here possess, in a community

## IMMORTALITY

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of similar personalities, and in the presence of God. This is the complex kind of present existence for which I have an "affection" now : this is the kind of existence for which I have a desire in the hereafter.

The idea of a Future life in which we shall, individually, have no share offers a totally different prospect and not that to which the Argument from Desire primarily leads. Of course I can, and do, desire a world to be enjoyed by others in my absence, but to substitute this for a world in which I shall participate is to cut out the original and primary self-regard in favour of the love for others which has rightly grown up along with it but which has no claim to dispossess it. The doctrine of Self-renunciation is now in great favour in the Western world, as it always has been in the Eastern ; but it rests upon a depreciation of the value of individuality which it is not a mark of honour and nobility to avow, but rather a confession of deficient insight and of faithlessness to a great trust imposed upon every individual

## ARGUMENT FROM THE EMOTIONS

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soul. To claim this is not to defend Egoism as that word is employed in its disparaging sense. It is not a repudiation of the claim of love for others as equal in worth to oneself : it is a claim that self stands along with the others, among them, and reciprocally related with them in one community.<sup>1</sup> Nor is it to set up from within ourselves a value in respect to God : it is to acknowledge, with humble gratitude, the gift by Him of spiritual personality which it were treason to Him to renounce.

When a personality which is animated by a legitimate respect for the value of self living with others in a Divine presence looks forward along the vista of time there arises the idea of continuance, and an attractive affection for that idea is the proper response of Feeling, and confers a value upon the idea besides its value as an illuminating thought. It is approved as a

<sup>1</sup> "It does not follow that each person is but a means and in no sense an end, that his real function is *vivre pour autrui*. . . . If family is an end for itself, then the persons who constitute it must share in the end, We cannot bring the parts under one category and the whole under another." Ward : "Realm of Ends," p. 387.

## IMMORTALITY

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worthy idea because it generates feelings of high quality and rank. Or conversely, it may be that it is the insatiability of Desire that sets the imagination in operation and causes the formation of the idea, and when the idea arises it sheds illumination on the prospect of the future. Whichever be the antecedent in time, the idea or the desire, the full situation is the idea or thought of continuance together with a mass of feeling and emotions proper to its quality and worth. We may then examine what is before us (a) as an idea contributing a new aspect to the Cosmos ; or (b) as a group of affections, which must be scrutinised for their worth in our emotional life. As an illuminating idea Metaphysics passes its judgment, and for the writer it delivers a reliable judgment on the affirmative side, though by no means a unanimous one. The scrutiny of the group of affections is our present task, which shall be commenced by an examination of the stock objection to the Argument.

The attack is usually launched in a very

## ARGUMENT FROM THE EMOTIONS

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concrete form : your desire for food, for example, it is said, gives no proof that food exists. But what does this mean ? It means that you, an individual in a particular locality, will not find that food is within your reach because you desire it : you may be on a raft out at sea : the propinquity of food is a contingency involving many details : there is no connection between this contingency and your desire. Yet your desire does really prove something about food, viz., that there has been food within your reach and that you have enjoyed it : your desire rests upon the recollection of that enjoyment. If you are thirty years old, it is certain that food has existed for that period, that the cosmos contains food, though you cannot get at it now because you are a castaway ; you may perish in spite of your desire. Desire springing from recollection of previous satisfaction proves the existence of its objects somewhere and at some time, but not in any particular place or at any particular time ; sufficiently, however, at the very least, to have produced your desire.

## IMMORTALITY

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The general position is : No Affections (with their Desires) would have arisen if there had never been objects to which they attach. On the level below imagination there must have been actual objects ; on the higher level of imagination there must have been ideal objects with the existence-value belonging to ideals. As against the embroilment with details and contingencies upon which this objection rests we set the conceptions of the necessary and universal. For Good of the supreme order, and highest values, Affection is boundlessly expandible, and Desire insatiable. When we call up the thought of *l'au-delà intérieur* we not only call up the idea but we respond from within the depths of Feeling ; and so also when we contemplate the whole spiritual community and the majesty of God.

It is from this elevation that the Argument from Desire for a future life is to be conducted against the objections urged by men who are only looking in the grass around their feet. We leave them where Anselm left Gaunilo opposing



## ARGUMENT FROM THE EMOTIONS

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an argument of which the pith was necessity by considerations drawn from the contingent ; where Idealism grieves over the lapse of even Kant with his setting what was true of a hundred dollars against the idea of a necessary and perfect ground of all being. The Desire for a future life is worth defending only as correlative with the necessary and universal in the realm of ideas ; and I maintain that the Desire is itself, after its kind, of equal rank with those ideas.

IV. But this central Emotion or Desire has a function in the general system of the Feelings. It has its own value, and also it *organises* many important feelings around itself. They are summoned into places in a system ; and receive new value because of their contribution to the whole. It is no case of our being under the influence of the " chance desires " from which Wordsworth felt happy in being delivered. Each comes in response to a call because it is proper to the situation set up by the dominating Feeling.

## IMMORTALITY

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Which particular Feelings seem naturally to congregate in a system which the Desire for a future life sets up? and which Feelings are excluded? and what is the relative value of those admitted and those kept out?

It must suffice here to consider two or three of the most important. As the extinction of our personality means plainly a cessation of life, or loss of what is now being enjoyed, the Feeling proper to the prospect is *Fear*. Life is the corner-stone of value without which other values belong to the fabric of imaginary visions: the prospect of the withdrawal of life brings up Fear. It may be said that the fear of annihilation can be overcome, and has been overcome in innumerable minds, and even that in some it never arises. But ought it not to arise when the situation is fully realised? and is not its non-appearance, or its being so weak that it can be overcome, what ought not to take place if Feeling is the proper response to the object of thought?

What then is the kind of emotionality to

## ARGUMENT FROM THE EMOTIONS

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which Fear belongs? It is acknowledged to be a weakening Emotion; it arrests activity generally, or it turns it into a narrow channel, absorbing attention to itself and derogating from the rights of other Feelings; it lies on the side of Pain—"the most painful of all the Emotions," Mr. Shand thinks; by its affinities it summons to its side such grim attendants as Anxiety, Cowardice, Anger. A similar element at work in our body would be accounted pathological: for analogous reasons Fear is pathological in the mind.

On the other hand, the Feeling proper to the prospect of continued life is *Hope*. This is in the above respects the opposite of Fear. It is a strengthening emotion; it stimulates activity generally; it consorts with other strengthening emotions, Kindliness and Courage; and it is on the side of Joy. Is there any conceivable ground for a mind which is free to choose inviting and cherishing the benumbing and painful Emotion, Fear, rather than the exhilarating and happy Emotion, Hope? Surely, so

## IMMORTALITY

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long as there is no compulsion upon us we are right in resisting the incubus of Fear, and accepting as appropriate to our nature the stimulus and happiness of Hope. "I hope," said Goethe, "that I shall never be so weak-minded as to let my belief in a future life be torn from me." Yes : Hope should be taken from us only by a process of "tearing," and this will be successful only when our minds are too weak to retain the hold we know we ought to retain.

Take another leading Emotion : *Admiration*, with its opposite, *Contempt*. Which of these two has the greater claim upon our choice, where choice is open? Again we have strengthening *versus* weakening ; capacity for consorting with other beneficent feelings against an arid inhibition of them or the invasion of ill-favoured companions in their place ; and enjoyment, as against disagreeableness or repugnance. For, surely, the prospect of the extinction of a developing personality and of the members of the whole community one by

## ARGUMENT FROM THE EMOTIONS

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one evokes contempt for the character of the world? Even if some achieve the completion of a brief curve of development, they are but few in comparison with the many who disappear from the bridge of life at every stage. And, for all, the contemplation of the narrow limits of this life, with its tale of irremediable faults and inconsolable sorrows, excites a *Contemptus Mundi* which has a withering effect upon our activities. While the contemplation of another sphere where progress will continue, where faults may be expiated, and sorrows consoled, calls up our Admiration and throws sunshine upon the prospect. And such a profound Contempt is quite likely to bring with it Anger at the opposition to our efforts; Regret for the impossibility of achieving Goodness; Disappointment at the loss of worthy aspirations. If this gloomy train is to be kept out of our hearts Admiration for a different prospect must be cherished, with Gratitude and Joy in its train.

But by all consents the highest of our Emo-

## IMMORTALITY

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tions is *Love*, and its contrast, *Hate*. These are "the giants of the group" (Bain). In so far as the prospect of annihilation of personality, one's own and that of others, one by one, afflicts us with a sense of frustration and disappointment our Feeling towards the Cosmos takes the form of Hate. This settles down into a comprehensive disposition with a train of gloomy attendants such as Fear, Repugnance, Disappointment, Anger and Sorrow. While the expectation of life, and more life and better for self and for our fellows, evokes Love, with its radiant retainers Admiration, Hope, Gratitude, and cheerful Joy. Hate is a sinister power to be allowed dominance in the soul. But what else can arise in the distracting situation that arises when Love is rejected, unrequited, thrown back upon us, void? A Cosmos which does not care for us sufficiently to sustain us in being does not love us as we have tried to love it, with heart and soul, but with a limited and terminable love. Surely, we either fall back stupefied in face of such frustration of the

## ARGUMENT FROM THE EMOTIONS

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promise of our spiritual nature, or else fall under the dark dominance of Hate ?

Whereas Love with its auxiliary feelings evokes the springs of activity, stimulates thought, and is a fountain of sunshine in the soul. The love which has been on the height where over the Cosmos rises the Personality of God, on its return brings with it a secret which it has learned, namely, that Pain is not *per se* an evil. Hence arises a new attitude to suffering in all its forms, an attitude which evicts Anger and Fear and leads to Courage, Fortitude, Heroism, and Saintliness. Love sustains the affirmative virtues of Faith and Hope ; which still remain, active for the creation of values, under its supreme inspiration.

V. I have stated the positive case for Feeling. But we must also take into account the possibility that a future life may be a prolongation of failures and misery, or even an extension of these. The prospect of an Inferno lies side by side with that of a Paradiso. In the history of the human mind the Fear of the one runs con-

## IMMORTALITY

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currently with the Hope of the other. "With heaven comes hell, with transcendent hope an unnameable despair" (Seeley, "Natural Religion," p. 261). Between the two there has been perpetual contention for supremacy and now one predominates and now the other.<sup>1</sup>

The Mediæval Church dragged with it a chain of terrors which the Reformers made no attempt to shake off,—though the Mystics within the Church did,—and great scope was left for Rationalists and Humanists to break new ground. At the present stage of the European mind it is obvious that the prospect of a Dantesque Inferno is no longer tolerable. It is regarded as a bad dream, and the feelings to which it gives rise must never be experienced again, whether through imposition of authority

<sup>1</sup> That Fear has preponderated in the religion of the world in early stages is a common opinion. It is not the opinion of a distinguished English writer on history of religions, Dr. Jevons. He writes: "The Emotion which prompted approach could not have been Fear, pure and simple: it must have been in the nature of awe and reverence—that Emotion is now, and probably always was, reverential in character." ("Idea of God," p. 24.)



## ARGUMENT FROM THE EMOTIONS

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or through projections of our own. Psyche, as Dr. Frazer presents her, has had "Tasks" to perform: the prospect of an Inferno may have had educative efficacy: but she is now relieved from duty in this respect at least. That this is acknowledged within the circle of Christianity is evident. It seems to be true that the Roman and the Eastern Churches both retain a formal insistence upon a terrific Inferno. But it turns out to appertain solely to a "supernatural" level or order, entered into by only a few souls, for good or for ill. The vast majority of men remain on a natural level, with the prospect of a Happiness suitable to their capacities. A scrutiny of recent presentations of Protestant Christian theology shows that in many the possibility of an Inferno is vehemently repudiated, while in others it is quietly ignored; and even where retained it is reduced to a shadow on the prospect of Paradiso, and often a passing shadow only.

But it is fair to ask, On what grounds can those who make the claim I am making for a

## IMMORTALITY

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happy future life repudiate the reverse prospect ? Is it a choice of caprice ? Are we rejecting without justification the indications of feelings which do arise, and which ought to arise ? I maintain that the choice is the one prescribed by philosophy, at least by the philosophy of ideals, and by the right psychology, the psychology of Personality. The teaching of these is that where disorder in the Feelings of men is produced there has been misdirection of the imagination, life-destroying and pain-producing ; but it is only ill-developed or weakened minds that can acquiesce in the permanence of anarchy in the life of Feeling. Replies to a Questionnaire recently sent out by the Students' Christian Movement show that in many minds the removal of the Fear of an Inferno has taken away something of the *urgency* of belief in a future life. But this ought to be only a temporary loss, and will be so for those who open their hearts for the uprising of the positive and life-giving feelings of Hope and Love. A healthy and vigorous soul will

## ARGUMENT FROM THE EMOTIONS

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feel that the vehemence of Carlyle is required to meet such a collapse with an everlasting No ; and escaping from such a Tophet will from its deepest respect for personality assent to the life-giving and life-inspiring brightness of confident Hope.

VI. To sum up. There is an important distinction between Feelings considered not only for themselves but as forces. There are some which arise and operate without any action of our conscious central self, and there are others with which we identify ourselves, and which we consciously strive to satisfy. The former arise within us, sometimes to our astonishment and dismay ; the latter we ourselves consciously adopt and make truly our own. The former work as undercurrents and we are aware of them only when they rise above the surface : in the latter we know where we are and to what we are moving. It is clear that conscious personality is entitled to take charge of our mind as a whole, and this includes the domination and direction of our

## IMMORTALITY

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feelings. We are not to accept all that offer themselves, nor in the precise volume in which they make their first appearance. But for us to be able to choose we must have an ideal before us.

This is plainly so for our ideas : and philosophy, in the broad sense, is just this taking over of all that is presented by " Science " and arranging it according to the architectonic ideas which enable us to construct a cosmos. I claim that the ideal has also its right in the realm of Feeling. And in the working out of such an ideal we form the manifold of feelings into a system in which there is a positive class which have both inherent value and contributory efficacy, and a negative class which have minus-values, subtracting from our life, but which are necessary as deterrents and warnings. But this latter class are of temporary and auxiliary value only, and as the soul progresses their office becomes less and less needful, while the others rightfully prolong themselves permanently.

## ARGUMENT FROM THE EMOTIONS

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In the momentous choice between a future life for spiritual personalities or their disappearance it is the Feelings possessed of positive value, and the ideal system of these, which have the right to our allegiance, and I submit that no such ideal system can be constructed without the expectation of a future life.

It will have been noticed that I have not made special reference to the thought of God, and the Emotions proper to adequate conceptions of His character and providential rule. And I now ask only for space to indicate what further aid comes to my contention if we lift our eyes towards the majesty of the Personality of God.

As philosophies have had recourse to the idea of God in order to establish the validity of knowledge, so it is our privilege to have recourse to the perfection of the Divine character in the realm of Feeling. This is so for all except those whose valuation of Feeling is so low and so inadequate that for them there is

## IMMORTALITY

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only a belief in an impassive Deity: that over all the range of Feelings, even the most noble, it must be written *Non dicenda de Deo*. But if God is the author of the whole Cosmos, and whatever appears in it is a finite manifestation of what in Him is infinite, then the life of Feeling also proceeds from His nature. Consequently, we are not left to consider only what ideals of Feeling we ourselves are capable of: we must ask what ideals flow from the Divine ideal. This enables us to make short work of the prospect of an Inferno for Feeling: that the Divine Heart should establish such a contrast to His own nature is a truly horrible thought. A Purgatorio of a remedial kind stands on a wholly different footing, and has the support of our best Feelings; but it is as subordinate and instrumental to the hope of Paradise. This, and this alone, is the ultimate goal of our Hope, and to this, and this alone, can our supreme Desire be directed. The highest Emotion, Love, at its strongest tension can look for satisfaction only in communion with infinite

## ARGUMENT FROM THE EMOTIONS

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Perfection. It is the hope of abiding in a community of which the members, in accord with one another, find their life in loving God and being loved by Him that is the final and consummate expectation of the human heart when we stand gazing into the Beyond.





THE MORAL ARGUMENT FOR  
PERSONAL IMMORTALITY

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## SYNOPSIS

### THE MORAL ARGUMENT

I. Direct metaphysical proof impossible, and yet metaphysics has an important bearing on the question. The moral argument contends that we cannot harmonize our moral with our scientific judgements without Immortality.

II. The argument involves three assumptions :

- (1) God. The ground of the Universe is spiritual ;
- (2) Self—the reality and relative independence of the individual mind ;
- (3) Conscience. The objective validity of our judgements of value.

III. The denial of Immortality generally springs from the denial of one or more of these beliefs, *e.g.* by Spinoza, Mr. Bradley, Prof. Bosanquet and certain Theologians.

IV. The moral argument does not imply the retributive view of Reward and Punishment (as contended by Prof. Laird). It is not enough to show that the Universe serves moral ends, that the existence of evil conduces to the development of character ; the question is whether the amount of good outweighs the evil, and this is doubtful.

Would any of us like to be responsible for the world as it is ? Why should we suppose man to be more merciful than God ? Impossible to believe in the rationality of the world or the love of God without Immortality.

V. And the unequal distribution of Good is not a matter of moral indifference. In a reasonable world goodness should lead to happiness in the end, not because goodness depends for its value upon reward, but because the true good includes the lower good as well as the higher : without Immortality this true good would be unattainable by the vast majority.

VI. Thus, the ethical demand for Immortality is based upon the unrealized capacities of human nature. This is the true meaning of the classical arguments—Plato's, Kant's, Christ's.

VII. How far this argument assumes the reality of Time.

VIII. Immortality does not involve Pre-existence.

IX. The demand not based upon a hankering after personal reward.

## THE MORAL ARGUMENT FOR PERSONAL IMMORTALITY

I am going to speak of the moral argument for Immortality. And I have chosen that line of argument because I very much doubt whether there is any other which does not at bottom presuppose or involve very much the same line of thought. Direct metaphysical proofs of immortality—arguments based upon the “simplicity” of the soul, upon a supposed present independence of the body or the like—may be regarded as wholly out of date: they all imply a view as to the relations of soul to body which cannot now be maintained. But to admit that there can be no direct metaphysical proof of immortality does not mean that Metaphysic has nothing to say to the matter—far from it.

## IMMORTALITY

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On the contrary, I believe that a reasonable man's attitude towards the question will, in the main, be determined by his general view of the Universe and particularly by that vital element in his *Weltanschauung* which is concerned with the status of the individual mind in its relation to the Universe as a whole. By a direct metaphysical argument I mean any line of thought which tries to establish immortality without taking into account the facts of the moral life and the world of values. What I mean by the moral argument for immortality is the contention that it is impossible to construct a view of Reality which shall do justice alike to that aspect of the Universe which is revealed by the judgements of Science and that aspect of it which is revealed in our moral judgements or judgements of value without the hypothesis of immortality for the individual soul. This implies that any argument for immortality must start with establishing a certain view of the ultimate nature of things. It is obvious that in a single lecture it will be impossible even to

## THE MORAL ARGUMENT

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outline that general view of the Universe which such an argument must presuppose. In such a lecture I can but enumerate the assumptions which I must make. I call them assumptions without implying that they cannot be justified by lines of thought as valid and as cogent as we can ever expect to obtain for any theory as to the ultimate constitution of Reality as a whole. Only here I have hardly time even to hint at the lines of argument by which they can be justified.

(1) I shall assume that the ultimate principle or ground of the Universe is spiritual—that is to say, that it must be thought of after the analogy, admittedly imperfect as such an analogy must be, of the only spiritual being of which we have immediate experience—that is to say, the human mind, conceived of not merely as intelligence but also as activity or will.

(2) I shall assume that the relation of the individual human mind to the ultimate or universal Mind is conceived of in such a way

## IMMORTALITY

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that its reality and its activity are not wholly merged or absorbed in that larger Mind from which its being is derived—that it is allowed to have a certain measure, not of absolute but of relative, independence.<sup>1</sup> I do not mean here to assume what is popularly known as the freedom of the will; but I do assume that the individual mind is something more than a phase or appearance of the universal Mind, and that the individual will is really the cause of what are commonly called the actions of the man.

(3) I assume the objective validity of our moral judgements. This does not, of course, mean that I or any other human being is infallible in his judgements of value, any more than he is in his scientific or his historical judgements. It means rather that the concept of Oughtness, or Goodness, or Value is part of the real nature of things—that it is not a mere

<sup>1</sup> I may refer to Prof. Laird's recent work "Problems of the Self" as containing a remarkably sane and judicious statement of this relative independence.

## THE MORAL ARGUMENT

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expression of my personal wishes or desires or idiosyncrasies, or even of the mental and emotional constitution of a particular species of two-legged animals which happens to have flourished during what Mr. Balfour has called a short and transitory episode—he might have said a discreditable episode—in the life of the meanest of the planets : and I shall assume that even in their concrete detail we may regard such judgements as valid, though here as in other regions of thought not all such judgements are equally trustworthy. Judgements of value, I shall assume boldly, are valid for Reality. We have just as much right to trust them, and to use them in our construction of the ultimate nature of things, as we have to trust any other of our judgements.

In more popular language my three assumptions are (1) the existence of God ; (2) the reality of the human soul as against either Materialism or any form of thought approximating to Pantheism ; (3) the existence and authority of Conscience.

## IMMORTALITY

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The denials of immortality generally spring from the denial of one or more of these positions, or at least from insufficient appreciation of, or emphasis upon, one or more of them when they are not actually denied. It is clear that the idea of immortality is impossible to anyone who takes a materialistic view of the relation between mind and body. If the soul is in any sense the mere accident or attribute or by-product of material processes, it is clear that its survival is out of the question. Almost equally fatal to a real belief in immortality are all the numerous shades of thought which tend to make of the individual soul merely an appearance of God or (as some thinkers would prefer to say) the Absolute, however spiritual the being of that Absolute may be declared to be. The most emphatic repudiation of personal immortality on the part of philosophers of a spiritualistic type has usually come from this side. Spinoza in the classical period of philosophical thought and Mr. Bradley in modern times are the typical exponents of this attitude, though even Mr.



## THE MORAL ARGUMENT

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Bradley's contempt for the individual hardly equals that of the eminent thinker who is too modestly in the habit of describing himself as a mere disciple of Mr. Bradley. Mr. Bradley's denial of full reality to the individual has in it a tinge of regret : Professor Bosanquet's attitude reminds me of the workhouse master who told a dying pauper that he ought to be very grateful that there was a Hell for the likes of him to go to. Many philosophers who in other ways are Christian enough in thought and feeling are more or less influenced by the same line of philosophical speculation, though in some of them this merging of the individual in the universal mind is represented in mystical fashion rather as a goal of future aspiration than as something which is already a fact in the case of the meanest, as of the most exalted, finite mind. This line of thought is responsible for the assertion of personal immortality by certain divines in a sense which it requires considerable subtlety to distinguish from a denial, and for the absence of such a hope in some of those lay

## IMMORTALITY

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philosophers in whom one would most expect to find it.

The beginning of any valid argument for immortality must be a vindication of the reality and the value of the individual soul. For such a vindication I of course have no time. I can only say that I assume the general line of thought which has recently been brilliantly developed by Professor Pringle-Pattison in his "Idea of God"; and still more convincingly, and (I must add) more consistently, by Professor Sorley in his "Moral Values and the Idea of God." But the fullest recognition of the reality and limited activity of the individual soul will not help even to suggest the idea of immortality unless there is also a strong confidence in the validity of our moral judgements. Speaking broadly, the moral argument for immortality is based upon the affirmation of the moral consciousness that, given such a being as man is in such a world as this is, man ought to be immortal. But the fact that we affirm man ought to be immortal supplies no reason for

## THE MORAL ARGUMENT

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thinking that he actually is immortal unless we are able to treat these moral judgements as valid judgments about reality, judgements which we have as much right to use in building up our conception of the Universe as any other part of the knowledge about its nature revealed by, or implied in, our experience of that little bit of the Universe with which we are in immediate contact. And this is just what is generally denied, with more or less emphasis and consistency, by those who tend to regard the individual mind as mere appearance. From mere appearance to false and delusive appearance is but a short step. In proportion as the individual is regarded as a mere appearance, an inconsistent, misleading, and rather contemptible appearance of the Absolute, possessing value merely in proportion as he contributes to the life of some larger Whole, his judgements as to what is really valuable, and any claims which he may make on the strength of them to recognition and satisfaction and greater fulness of life, are discredited in advance. Any arguments

## IMMORTALITY

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which may be based upon the evil or imperfection of a Universe in which such a being as man is doomed to a very imperfect development, a maimed and often painful existence and an early extinction, are set aside as arising from the too limited and one-sided, the merely subjective character, of human judgements about right and wrong. Looked at from the point of view of the whole, we are assured, the atrocities and the sufferings of the late war are as beautiful a thing, as essential a contribution to the perfection of the alone valuable Whole, as German Philosophy or English Philanthropy. Such is the avowed attitude of men like Mr. Bradley and Professor Bosanquet ; and even in their more Christian-minded imitators there are traces of the same contempt for mere morality, and for the estimates of human sin and suffering which mere moral judgements entail ; though in them it may take the form of exalting the mystical intuition in the light of which, even without any hope of individual survival, it is seen that all things are and always have been very

## THE MORAL ARGUMENT

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good—that is to say, good for the few mystics who enjoy these experiences, and the Absolute of whose existence theirs is a part. For any serious examination of this position I have no time. All I can do is to admit that without a thoroughgoing respect for the moral consciousness and its affirmations, no argument for immortality—a personal or even, if such language has any meaning, an impersonal immortality—can possibly be constructed. All I can say by way of argument on this head is to challenge the objectors to give any reason why human judgements about right and wrong should be distrusted more than those human judgements the validity of which is assumed in the argument directed towards the discrediting of them.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This does not imply the “ethical obsession” against which the Dean of St. Paul’s protests if by that is meant the view that only the good will has value to the exclusion of knowledge and æsthetic experience and other forms of spiritual life; it does mean (a) that the good-will (which of course cannot exist apart from knowledge and feeling) is assigned the highest value, and (b) that the moral consciousness is recognised as the judge of the value to be assigned to other elements in life.

## IMMORTALITY

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Assuming then the existence of God and self and the validity of our highest ideals of good, why cannot we construct a reasonable and self-consistent idea of the Universe without immortality? In one of the most penetrating attacks upon the hope of immortality, or at least upon this particular argument for immortality, which I have ever read—an article, "The Ethics of Immortal Reward,"<sup>1</sup> by Professor Laird in a recent number of the *Hibbert Journal*—it is suggested that the moral argument for immortality really implies the retributive theory of Punishment and the corresponding theory of Reward, and has no basis apart from it. The argument, as he understands it, is supposed to run thus. Our moral consciousness assures us that goodness ought to be rewarded, and vice punished. But the ordinary course of Nature shows hardly any tendency to secure an adequate reward for virtue or punish-

<sup>1</sup> Vol. xvi., p. 580 (1918). In his "Problems of the Self" Prof. Laird leaves the question wholly open, maintaining that Psychology has nothing to say for or against the belief.

## THE MORAL ARGUMENT

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ment for vice. Assuming that there exists a spiritual Being capable of rewarding virtue and punishing vice, and assuming that these moral judgements of ours represent the nature and will of that Being, it must be supposed that He will provide a future life wherein these rewards and these punishments shall be brought into existence. Such is undoubtedly—in substance—the way in which the argument was stated by thinkers like Kant and Bishop Butler, and in which it is still sometimes propounded—more often perhaps by theologians than by philosophers. But this seems to me a wholly inadequate statement of what is meant by the moral argument in the form in which it would find most philosophical support at the present day. It seems to be the last infirmity of acute philosophic minds that they can seldom state the case of their opponents in its strongest form, and prefer to win easy triumphs over some antiquated version or some gross caricature of the case they have really got to meet. I agree with Professor Laird in rejecting the notion

## IMMORTALITY

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that punishment is an end in itself, and that reward can be claimed as a matter of right or abstract justice. But the Professor proceeds to argue that, if there is no reason why vice should be punished or virtue rewarded, then the inequalities of human life, the sufferings of the righteous, the spectacle of the wicked flourishing as a green bay-tree, the great tragedies of history, the low degree of happiness attainable in the three-score years and ten of average human existence—all these constitute no argument why the Universe should not be regarded as a just and reasonable Universe even without the hope of any future life for the individual. Whatever be Professor Laird's exact attitude towards Theism, he very emphatically states his belief that the Universe has moral ends and that these ends are fulfilled. That being so, he would, I presume, account for the presence of evil in such a universe as being a necessary means to the good. If we refuse to regard pleasure as the only or the chief good and pain as the supreme evil, then we must suppose that



## THE MORAL ARGUMENT

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the existence of real evil in the world is the necessary condition for the production of the highest good in the world—for the development of character and intellect, and especially character—for the evolution of souls freely willing the good for its own sake. If this is Professor Laird's position, I am in hearty agreement with it. Now some measure of such moral goodness and of other high values is undoubtedly produced by this Universe, and therefore—so it seems to be suggested—the Universe has got all the justification that Reason can demand. Or, to put it theistically, the world is such a world as can be supposed to be willed by a God whose nature is revealed by our highest judgements of value. Now I believe profoundly that, so far as it goes, Professor Laird's theodicy—if such it is intended to be—is right. I should insist, indeed, that the willing of a world with so much evil in it implies a certain limitation of the divine Power ; and I should point out that, though we can see the necessity for the evil up to a certain point,

## IMMORTALITY

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we cannot see in detail the necessity for all the evil that actually exists. But still substantially it is right, as it seems to me, to find the explanation of the evil—so far as our limited intelligence can find it at all—in the values which are realized in and by the struggle against it, and in the other values to the production of which we must suppose the evil to be a necessary means. The value of moral goodness is not dependent upon the fact of its being rewarded here or hereafter any more than the value of intellectual activity or of æsthetic enjoyment: it is good in itself. Moral evil is none the less evil because in some cases it may lead to a life in which pleasure predominates. Professor Laird even maintains that the “impartiality of the universe, miscalled indifference, is precisely what ought to occur in a moral universe,” by which I suppose is meant that it is conducive to the moral ends of the Universe that virtue should often not be rewarded, and wickedness often prosper. And up to a certain point, this is a proposition which can hardly be

## THE MORAL ARGUMENT

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denied. Kant long ago maintained that if we had the same certainty as to the existence of future rewards and punishments as we have of the existence of the Sun and Moon, it might "corrupt the purity of our wills." Many theologians have said the same thing in other words. But is this theodicy sufficient? I do not think Professor Laird sufficiently recognizes that to justify the Universe as an expression of Reason and Goodness it is not enough to show that in it certain values are realized: we must find grounds for believing that the good is sufficient to outweigh the evil, the pain and misery, the ignorance and stupidity and the sin which also exist in the world. And is this actually the case?

I for one cannot take a contemptuous view of the value either of pleasure or of happiness: and Professor Laird is quite emphatic in asserting that "happiness is good and pain is bad." Pleasure is of many different kinds: some kinds of it are doubtless of very little value—some perhaps have a negative value, but other

## IMMORTALITY

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kinds of pleasure are of high value, and pleasure is an element in all the highest and most desirable kinds of conscious life. I cannot, therefore, dismiss the pleasure-side of life in the light and airy way which is fashionable with some idealistic philosophers. Nor can I regard it as a note of moral elevation to be indifferent to the negative value of other people's pain. And when I ask myself whether the good that is realized in this transitory existence (if this were all) is really worth all the pain that it costs, I begin to have doubts. The doubts are strengthened when we turn to the higher goods, when we think of the small number of those who have participated to any high degree in the best intellectual life, in the highest æsthetic enjoyment, in the most satisfying forms of practical activity. And when we turn to the strictly ethical side of life, how few are those who have attained ; how mixed has been the character even of the reputed saints and heroes ; how low has been the general level, how appalling the mass of sin and selfishness, excuseless

## THE MORAL ARGUMENT

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cruelty and irrational hate ! Is the good that is produced really worth the misery, the ugliness, the sin which it has cost ?

After all, would any one of us like to be responsible for the creation of the world as it is ? No doubt it may be suggested that the question implies a creation in time such as modern philosophers and men of Science are pretty well unanimous in rejecting. But the question is a quite legitimate one for anyone who thinks of the world, including the being of the lesser spirits to whose life it is organic, as a world created by a universal Mind in the sense that it expresses the ultimate nature of that Mind—for anyone, that is, who attaches any sort of meaning to the idea of creation, though it may be conceived of as an eternal creation. I repeat, then, would any of us care to be responsible for the evil of the world ? Or (if from an indeterminist point of view you plead that part of this evil is due to the undetermined choice of partially free spirits) would any of us care to be responsible for allowing this evil to go on, and

## IMMORTALITY

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for directly causing the evil that is not due to human freedom, for the sake of such hedonistic, intellectual, and moral values as are actually realized in the world's history up to the present date? And without any pessimistic disparagement of possible future progress we may add the further question, "Is there any sober ground for anticipating such a quality and quantity of life in the future as will be worth the thousands of years during which the highest attainments have been rare and very imperfect, the general level low, the abysses of misery and of sin profound and terrible?" If it rested with one of us to determine whether the life of this planet should go on, if by pressing a button he could put a stop to all the conscious life upon it, would he feel justified in refusing to press that button? For myself, I think I should say "Great as is the good that I know I am extinguishing, I cannot make myself responsible for a continuance of our present horrors." I think I should have to press the button. Still more certain am I that I should have pressed

## THE MORAL ARGUMENT

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the button, had I been given that opportunity in the days (say) of palæolithic man. And I am sure most people will agree with me, or would do so but for the operation of certain powerful prejudices. Why should we suppose God to be so much less loving and compassionate than man? If that is the way in which we, in the exercise of that moral judgement which supplies our only means of judging about these questions, feel bound to think, why should we suppose that God thinks otherwise? If we deny that our moral judgements have any application to God or the Absolute, we have no ground left for saying that God is good. There is only one way in which the good realized in these years of earthly life can be supposed adequately to outweigh the evil; and that is to look upon earthly life as but a part, a preliminary part, a relatively short stage in the development of souls which have a long period of development and vast possibilities of increasingly valuable experience open to them after they have been delivered from the bodily organisms which

## IMMORTALITY

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determine, and which limit, their present capacities for action and for enjoyment. With the hypothesis of immortality we can regard the world as a reasonable world expressive of a purpose for the realization of the highest possible good, and a purpose which on the whole and in the end will be accomplished: without immortality I do not see that we can. To put it more simply, with immortality we can believe that God is Love, and the world an expression of that Love: without it we cannot.

So far I have been speaking of the total mass of good and evil in the world. In a reasonable Universe there must be no evil that is not necessary as a means to, or a condition of, the realization of good; and the good realized must be worth the evil involved in the means—greater than the evil, I should be disposed to say *much* greater, because the absence of good is such a much less evil than the presence of evil. But I am not prepared, as Professor Laird seems to be, to ignore altogether the question of distribution. Such good as is realized in



## THE MORAL ARGUMENT

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human life seems hardly worth the evil that it costs ; but not only so ; that good is most unequally distributed. Goods of all kinds—the highest as well as the lowest—are distributed in a way which suggests the wildest caprice. If it be insisted that the highest goods can only be realized by personal exertion, there is certainly no equality of opportunity in respect of the highest any more than of the lowest goods. Unless (like Origen) we believe in a pre-natal fall, unless we believe that man's spiritual privileges in the present life are the consequences of pre-natal effort or pre-natal sin, it is not the fault of one man that he was born an African devil-worshipper or due to the virtue of another that he was born a Christian. I cannot follow Professor Laird in regarding this utter lack of correspondence between virtue and happiness as no evil or even as a positive good. I am not prepared to say that a righteous will is not justified in causing a very unequal distribution of good if that is necessary to increase the quantity of good on the whole. The best men, in the

## IMMORTALITY

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exercise of their voluntary activity, constantly cause pain to one man in order to secure a greater good to a greater number. And certainly, if God is in any sense the cause or the ground of this world, that is the only principle upon which it is possible to explain the actual distribution of goods upon this planet. I do not say that justice requires that the wicked should be punished, except so far as they can be made better thereby : nor do I say that the good ought to be rewarded in exact proportion to merit. But I do regard this very unequal distribution of goods as an evil. If we are justified in believing a future life as the only hypothesis on which the quantity and quality of good here attainable can be regarded as worth the evil, we are justified equally in hoping for a state in which there will be some nearer approach to justice in distribution : and without that future state there cannot even be that predominance of good over evil which might justify some inequality of distribution. I am not now reverting to the retributive theory.

## THE MORAL ARGUMENT

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Because one gives up the idea of retributive justice, that is no reason why one should give up the ideal of distributive justice—that ideal which was so strongly emphasized, for instance, by the late Professor Sidgwick, who was no believer in retributive punishment or reward. I do not say that justice demands that virtue should be rewarded with other goods. But I do say that it does require that, so far as possible, every soul that is created should enjoy some good proportionate to its capacity. The possibilities even of virtue are most unequally distributed. And virtue by itself is not the whole good of life. The life of the virtuous man on the rack has a value, no doubt ; but there is one thing better than the life of a virtuous man on the rack, and that is the life of a virtuous man off the rack. Happiness is part, though it is not the whole, of “our being’s end and goal,” and happiness does include pleasure and the absence of pain. If this life were all, then that true end of life, that supreme beatitude—which includes both virtue and happiness, the enjoyment of

## IMMORTALITY

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knowledge and beauty and much besides—would be missed, or enjoyed but in a most imperfect measure and for some transitory moment, by a very large proportion of the best men. And that is an evil. The ideal which our judgements of value hold up to us would have to be pronounced to be unattainable, and the attainable approximation to it a very distant approximation for the vast majority. Is a Universe so constituted a reasonable Universe? We need not, it seems to me, postulate even in the future life any exact compensation in proportion to merit or to sufferings previously borne; but it is reasonable to hope for a life in which the other elements of the ideal life will become attainable for those who have reached the higher levels of goodness. The morally good ought to be made happy, not because they have earned a reward, but because, if they are not, the true good will be attainable by no one, nowhen, and nowhere. That is the element of truth which lies at the bottom of the popular demand that the good shall be rewarded.

## THE MORAL ARGUMENT

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As for the more imperfect characters—the less good, the average men, the wicked—positive punishment is, indeed, justifiable only as a means: but for them, even more than for the righteous, the attainment of the true end of their being is possible only on the hypothesis of a future life, in which, whether by painful or by other means, they may be rendered capable of the higher goods and of the sort of happiness which cannot exist without the higher goods, but which the higher goods cannot by themselves secure.

Professor Laird seems to think that the Universe is sufficiently rationalized or moralized if there is in it some amount of goodness and some amount of happiness, but that there is no reason at all why the two should go together or be enjoyed by the same persons. I venture to hold that the supreme good does not lie either in goodness or in happiness enjoyed separately or by different persons, but in a life which is both good and happy (not to mention the other elements of good which it will include);

## IMMORTALITY

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and if this supreme good is to be enjoyed by anyone, it must be enjoyed by some definite person or persons. If it is not so enjoyed, it does not exist at all, and to that extent the end of a moral Universe remains unrealized. To my mind it is an evil that any human being should miss such a life ; and it is evil or irrational that the elements of it should only be enjoyed separately. It is an evil that those who possess the highest thing in life should never enjoy that lower good without which the highest good is not *the* good. It is an evil that the wicked should permanently get pleasure or happiness, because the pleasure or happiness which is compatible with wickedness is a good of a very low order ; and its enjoyment, so far as bad men do enjoy it, tends to make them incapable of a much higher good. A Universe which would not ultimately bring about a greater co-existence of the higher and the lower elements of good than now exists is not a Universe to which I should think it reasonable to attribute a moral purpose. To put the matter

## THE MORAL ARGUMENT

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in more definitely theistic and Christian terms, it would be a Universe which could not be reasonably regarded as in any sense the expression of a righteous and loving Will.

To put the whole argument in another way, the true ground of the ethical demand for immortality lies in the unrealized capacities of human nature. Humanity is capable of, and (if any teleological assumption is justified) seems made for, a good so much higher than any that is actually attainable in this life. The good actually realized seems hardly worth the cost. Unless this realization can be carried further, it would seem better that so little good, mixed with so much evil, should not have been at all. That is what we naturally think—those of us whose eyes are adequately open to both sides of the matter, the poverty of the actual realization, the supreme value of the life of which in brief and fitful glimpses humanity shows itself capable. And so we must suppose God to think, if God is anything like humanity at its best. A God of love could not create such a world.

## IMMORTALITY

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The contrast between the immensity of human capacity and the poorness of the attainment—that is the inmost kernel of all the great classical arguments for immortality. That is the thought which underlies the famous Platonic arguments, so indefensible as mere pieces of dialectic. That is the thought which Kant somewhat degraded or caricatured. That is the real meaning of the one argument which Jesus Christ ever used on the subject. A Being who was ever thought worthy of such communion with God as the heroes of the Hebrew race were thought to have enjoyed could not be destined for so poor and transitory a life as this world would be, if this were all. “God is not the God of the dead but of the living.” So poor and so transitory : the transitoriness is part of the poverty. For I cannot sympathize with those who loftily pretend that true values have nothing to do with duration. A tenth of a second of the direst torture ever endured by man would be a negligible evil : and who would care for an intellectual insight, an æsthetic rapture, a supremest



## THE MORAL ARGUMENT

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blessedness which lasted only for such a period ? Our life here is in time. Once again, a God of love could not have doomed humanity to such a life, unless indeed His power is limited to an extent which would seem hardly compatible with the ascription to Him of any power at all. The attempt to combine the Christian view of God with the denial of immortality is peculiarly difficult for thinkers who are full of lofty scorn for the idea of even such a limitation of God's power as has been recognized by most orthodox theologians.

I have given you a bare outline of what I believe to be the true argument for immortality. I am deeply conscious of the difficulties of the conception : but to me it is the only way of escape from the greater difficulties which stand in the way of every other possible theory of the Universe—of all non-theistic theories and of a Theism without immortality. But difficulties are not necessarily objections. It may be possible for a theory of the Universe to escape contradiction or fatal objections : no theory can

## IMMORTALITY

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escape difficulties. Many lectures would be wanted if I were to try to meet possible objections : but there is one about which I must say just a word. I shall be told in many quarters that I have been assuming the reality of time, and that that is an assumption which no philosopher can make. I am afraid that my reply must be brief and dogmatic. All our experience is in time, and we can form no intelligible conception of an experience which is out of time. That is admitted by most of those who talk so glibly about Reality or the Absolute, or perhaps even their own individual selves, being "out of time." They feel driven to it by certain lines of argument, but they admit that they do not really know what it means. When, as is sometimes the case, they are scornful about personal survival and yet speak of personal immortality, they are compelled at every turn to use language which implies time.<sup>1</sup> I for one do not think that an

<sup>1</sup> "Space and time do not belong to the eternal world. . . . Eternal life is no diffusion or dilution of personality, but its consummation. It seems certain then that in such

## THE MORAL ARGUMENT

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appeal to the unintelligible is any real solution of difficulties. For us nothing is out of time except truth and true judgements; and judgements are not real existences.

To say that we are eternal because it will always be true that we have lived, and that our life possessed a value,<sup>1</sup> is merely to trifle with a serious problem: and yet that is what seems to be meant by a future life for the individual which will not be

a state of existence individuality must be *maintained*." ("Outspoken Essays," by W. R. Inge, D.D., Dean of St. Paul's, p. 276.) The word "maintained" of course implies persistence in time. "If my particular life-meaning passes out of activity, it will be because the larger life, to which I belong, *no longer* needs that form of expression. My death, like my birth, *will have* a teleological justification, to which my supratemporal self *will* consent." (*Ib.* p. 273: Italics mine.)

<sup>1</sup> "If every life in this world represents an unique purpose in the Divine mind, and if the end or meaning of soul-life, though striven for in time, has both its source and its achievement in eternity, this, the value and reality of the individual life, must remain as a distinct fact in the spiritual world." (Inge, "Outspoken Essays," p. 276.) Elsewhere the Dean tells us that it is a legitimate hope that in another life the Soul may be able to act more freely. ("The Philosophy of Plotinus," p. 264.) I find it quite impossible to reconcile his various utterances on the subject.

## IMMORTALITY

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in time. I quite recognize the force of the old Kantian antinomy—the impossibility of thinking either of a first event, a beginning of time, or of an endless series of events both ways. But it is no solution of that difficulty to talk about time as merely an appearance, as purely subjective or phenomenal and the like. If and so far as it is an appearance, all our lives—our joys, our sorrows, our knowledge, our morality, our sins, God Himself as thought of by us—are mere appearances too. That is admitted by the philosopher who has most logically followed out this line of thought; and he ends by admitting also that the Absolute is after all an entity which exists only in these appearances. Therefore, after all, the appearances are the only reality there is. It is perhaps not impossible to justify belief in a future life, and even an endless future, upon the assumption that the Absolute is timeless. If the Absolute (or the Universe as a whole) somehow includes within itself the experiences which we call lives in time, even on that view

## THE MORAL ARGUMENT

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there is no reason why it should not contain within itself immortal lives in time. The unending life will be an appearance, no doubt, but it need not be less real than the life that now is. Doubtless we cannot think how endless lives should be comprised within a timeless reality : but neither can we understand how a life of six weeks should be an element in a timeless reality. And the same line of reply, I may say in passing, might be adopted against those who object to personal immortality on the ground of the unreality of the individual person, and talk about an impersonal immortality in which the person will somehow be swallowed up. Granted that the individual is unreal, a mere appearance, and generally contemptible : there is no reason why an immortal self should not be at least as real as a mortal one. And that perhaps would satisfy most of us. These are not mere *argumenta ad hominem* ; they tend to show the impossibility of reconciling the mode of thought on which the objections are based with the actual laws of human

## IMMORTALITY

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thinking, and still more with an even approximately Christian presentation of the Universe. Those who deny personal immortality on the ground that the temporal is unreal are equally bound to reduce to the level of mere appearance the present self, our present notions of morality and sin, God Himself, so far as He is knowable at all. The more logical of them avowedly do so.

My own way of dealing with the antinomy about time is far too simple to please philosophers. It is simply to recognize that here we come to the limits of human thought. Doubtless there must be a way of "transcending" the antinomy. Doubtless God knows what it is, but we do not. Doubtless God must be supposed Himself in some way to transcend time: we may if we like call Him "supra tempus" (that is much better than "out of time"), but we do not know how this transcendence is effected. And I have never read any philosopher's attempt to effect that transcendence which does not fall into manifold

## THE MORAL ARGUMENT

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more antinomies and contradictions than it escapes. We cannot transcend the antinomy : but, just as the existence of that antinomy is no reason for not believing in the Sciences which assume a real difference between past, present, and future, and for not treating as real and very important the selves which are in time, so that unsolved difficulty supplies us with no reason for not accepting the conclusion to which we are led no less inevitably by the use of our intellectual faculties—that the only way in which the world can be supposed adequately to fulfil a rational purpose is by supposing that after death there will be a continuance of this personal life for the individual. That conception is doubtless inadequate ; but it is less inadequate than the meaningless assertion that time exists within a timeless reality, or the still more self-contradictory assertion that at a certain date in the future *I* shall pass out of time into the timeless.

One word on a further objection. It is very common among philosophers to assume that,

## IMMORTALITY

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if you believe in personal immortality, you are bound to believe in personal pre-existence. That assumption seems to me part of that deep-rooted philosophical prejudice that the temporal is a synonym for the unreal or the contemptible, that there is no such thing as real change, that nothing ever really happens, that the whole drama of events in the natural world and in the innermost life of souls is all a phantasmagoric representation of a static Reality. What the purpose or the value of such a representation—or misrepresentation—may be, is a question which does not seem to trouble such thinkers,<sup>1</sup> and indeed it would seem from such a point of view that there can be no real purpose in the Universe as a whole : for at the end of the procession, or at every point in it, you are only just where you were at the beginning. The eternal “as you were” is always the end of all human and of all divine actions, in so far as we can still talk about action in a static world. From such

<sup>1</sup> Unless, as some have suggested, we say that it supplies timeless diversion to the Absolute.



## THE MORAL ARGUMENT

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a point of view it may well seem, as it has seemed to some, a grotesque supposition that the fluctuations of the birth-rate can affect the quantity of real being in the Universe.<sup>1</sup> Against such a point of view the system of M. Bergson is a much-needed, though exaggerated, protest—exaggerated, because I for one fail to understand the idea of change without the complementary idea of something which persists through change. I must once again express my admiring agreement with the searching criticism to which this whole line of thought has recently been subjected by Professor Pringle-Pattison and Professor Sorley.<sup>2</sup> When once this prejudice

<sup>1</sup> “A kingdom of heaven inhabited by a population of spiritual monads, the number of which is determined by the fluctuation of the birth-rate and the duration of human life on this planet . . . is hardly credible except as a symbolical picture.” (Inge, “Personal Idealism and Mysticism,” p. 182.) I need hardly say that the doctrine of “impervious monads” is not maintained in this Essay or by most of the writers against whom the Dean seems to be tilting.

<sup>2</sup> I am most completely in agreement with Prof. Sorley who, much more definitely than Prof. Pringle-Pattison, regards the belief in personal immortality as vital to any theory which represents the Universe as rational.

## IMMORTALITY

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against the idea of change is abandoned, there is nothing unreasonable in the ordinary doctrine of immortality without pre-existence, though I should be far from wishing to describe as unchristian or irrational a doctrine which was held by Origen. The short answer to the objection about pre-existence is that, if the belief in immortality is based upon moral considerations — upon the impossibility of rationalizing the Universe without it, then we may disbelieve in life before birth because it is not required for the rationalization of the Universe, and believe in life after death because it is so required. What is the ultimate goal of that continued progress towards the good in which both the present life and the life beyond must be supposed to consist is a question which our inability to understand the true nature of Time prevents us from answering : but, if there be any truth in the moral argument, we may be content with feeling sure that the solution must be one which will give a real meaning to the idea of salvation—a meaning

## THE MORAL ARGUMENT

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which cannot be given to it by any philosophy which reduces change, human effort, personal existence to unreal seemings within the being of a changeless, unpurposeful, super-moral, and impersonal Absolute. All attempts to christianize such a Universe seem to me to represent an illogical, vacillating, and at bottom unintelligible halting between two fundamentally opposed and incompatible points of view.

May I conclude with one word of protest against the cheap sneers indulged in by many philosophers who either disbelieve, or, while professing in some sense to believe, seek to disparage, the doctrine of personal immortality. They persistently represent it as springing from a mercenary hankering after personal reward, or a personal dislike of extinction, from which, often with considerable self-complacency, they profess themselves immune. Such sneers are as unjustified and as unworthy as the old suggestion, long since abandoned by reputable theologians, that the real motive of "infidelity" is to be found in a personal desire for vicious

## IMMORTALITY

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self-indulgence and a fear of the penalties which, if religion were true, would await it in another world. St. Paul was willing to be accursed for his brethren's sake, if they could be saved : but he would not have looked upon the extinction of those brethren at the moment of death with the wonderful complacency with which the philosophers in question seem to contemplate the extinction of the millions who have, so far, had little reason to be grateful for their existence. Which is the more refined, the more exalted, and (as some of the philosophers in question profess the Christian religion) I will add the more Christian frame of mind—which attitude may most reasonably be attributed to the supreme Mind—I will leave you to judge. Doubtless our wishes—even our disinterested wishes—are no proof that their object is attainable : but, if the Universe is so constituted as habitually to thwart the desire naturally felt by the best men in their best moments, I do not myself see how it is possible to think of that Universe as expressing the nature of a Mind

## THE MORAL ARGUMENT

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which is supposed to have made the fullest revelation of Himself in the human mind, and in particular in its judgements of value.<sup>1</sup> I do not understand a philosophy which proposes to find in our judgements of value the clue to the inmost nature of Reality, and yet treats the hope of Immortality as irrational, immoral, or contemptible. In view of its many difficulties, I can understand—only too well—many degrees of hopeful confidence or of regretful doubt in minds which share this fundamental conviction. I can understand in short any attitude but one—that of contemptuous indifference.

<sup>1</sup> I need not say that the whole of my argument is immensely strengthened for those who regard this revelation of God in humanity as culminating in a unique revelation in Christ.



IMMORTALITY IN THE LIGHT OF  
MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

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## SYNOPSIS

I. Introduction. Immortality and theories of the psycho-physical relation.

II. The facts of cerebral localisation. Mind and the cerebral cortex.

III. The theory of psycho-physical materialism, or automatism.

IV. Criticisms of this theory, (1) psychological, (2) logical, and (3) metaphysical.

V. The theory of psycho-physical parallelism.

VI. Psycho-physical idealism, an idealistic form of the previous theory. Consciousness is the *reality* of the activity of the cerebral cortex.

VII. The theory of psycho-physical interaction. Mind and brain are distinct entities and interact with one another.

VIII. Criticisms of interaction.

IX. Arguments in favour of interaction.

X. Bergson's theory of psycho-physical interaction. "Pure" perception and "pure" memory. Perception is for the sake of action, and not primarily for the sake of thought. It partakes of the physical. Memory is essentially spiritual. There are no memory "centres" in the brain. The brain is merely a motor organ. Pure memory and rote memory are absolutely different from one another. No "pure" memories are ever lost, although brain disease may hinder their recall to consciousness.

XI. Recall of early memories of childhood by hypnosis.

XII. Facts indicating the possible existence of disincarnate minds.

XIII. The production of so-called "travelling clairvoyance" in hypnotised subjects.

The verdict of modern psychology is in favour of the possibility of a future life. But scientific proofs of its certainty are still to seek.



## IMMORTALITY IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN PSYCHOLOGY<sup>1</sup>

I. The title of this lecture is given as "Immortality in the Light of Modern Psychology." I do not know that I should have chosen exactly that title. The reason why the word "immortality" appears in it is that a number of lectures were suggested, to be given by different people, on different aspects of the problem, studied from the point of view of different sciences.

From the point of view of Psychology there is not very much that one can say about immortality. What one will be tempted to do will be to see how far modern views of the relation of soul to body (mind to brain) fit in

<sup>1</sup> This lecture was delivered *ex tempore*, and I am greatly indebted to Miss M. E. Clarke, B.A., for the accurate verbatim report which she made of it.

## IMMORTALITY

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with the hypothesis of immortality, or—to use a less extreme word—of bodily survival. If we believe that the mind comes to an end when the body ceases to exist, then the question of immortality is settled—there can be no immortality. We can only begin to consider the question from the psychological point of view if we have been able to refute the various theories which would make it impossible.

I will begin by considering two or three theories of the relation of mind to brain that have had a great vogue in the last two generations and that stand definitely in the way of any hope of life after death. I will then consider other theories which hold out more hope of this, and, finally, I will endeavour to give you quite briefly a few facts, and discuss other facts which either point towards the survival of bodily death or which make it not impossible to accept that view.

II. It is well known that consciousness is related directly to only a very small part of the human organism, indeed it is related directly

## MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

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to only a very small part of the brain, the cerebral cortex—at least until quite recently it was considered that consciousness was related only to this very small part of the brain. . . . Recently, however, we have been getting more and more evidence which tends to show that certain kinds of consciousness are related to certain of the so-called sub-cortical centres, masses of brain matter, cells and fibres, cells predominating, in the optic thalamus and the corpus striatum below the cortex. But, if we take these portions as continuous with the cerebral cortex—though that is not quite the right way of putting it—we can say that there is only a very small part indeed of the body that is directly related to consciousness.

And how is it related to consciousness? Investigations in cerebral localisation have shown us that sensory powers and motor powers are linked up with definite parts of the cortex. The occipital area—the part at the back of the head—mediates visual sensations; consciousness involving sound is bound up with changes

## IMMORTALITY

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in the temporal cortex at the side of the head ; consciousness of cutaneous sensation is linked up with changes in the post-central convolution, etc. Further, these various sensory centres are linked up with the sense organs on the opposite side of the body. And similarly with the various movements. Voluntary initiation of movement seems to be linked up with definite systems of nerve cells in the pre-central convolution. The localisation is very detailed there, and these centres are linked up with muscles on the opposite side of the body. For taste and smell sensations the localisation is not so definitely determined.

III. Starting on this basis we have three possible theories of the relation of consciousness to the brain, and so eventually to the body. One theory is the theory of *psycho-physical materialism or automatism*. According to this theory the changes in the brain are the causes of different kinds of consciousness. A change which occurs in the occipital cortex causes visual sensation, a change which occurs in the

## MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

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temporal cortex causes auditory sensation, a change in the pre-central convolution causes consciousness of volitional movement, etc. The brain change comes first in every case, the change in consciousness comes second. There is a definite causal relation, always in one direction, from matter to mind or spirit. Consciousness, according to this theory, might be regarded as a sort of phosphorescence playing over the nerves of the brain. . . . This theory of course excludes the possibility of immortality.

Many people in the last generation would have considered a theory like this the obvious theory, would have thought that it fitted in best with the facts of natural science which we had been able to collect. As we study the evolution of the brain from lower organisms to higher, we find that it becomes more and more complicated, especially the cerebral cortex, and this would correspond to an evolution of consciousness. Consciousness is a sort of by-product of the development of cerebral activity. All activity is really physiological

## IMMORTALITY

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activity. There is no such thing as mental activity—this is an illusion. When we seem to be active, our cerebral cortex is active one way or other, and this produces in us a feeling of activity.

IV. But, on this hypothesis, intellectual activity would be illusory, and consequently all the products of intellectual activity, one of which is this theory of psycho-physical materialism, would be illusory also, so that the theory is refuted by itself.

This should be a sufficient argument to dismiss psycho-physical materialism, but I should like to refer to one or two other arguments brought against it, because they come into our discussion of other parts of the subject. If we explain consciousness in terms of brain change we are also explaining intellectual processes, which are a part of consciousness, in this way. That is to say we are explaining consciousness in terms of something which needs consciousness for its explanation. If you consider the theories of specialists in the various

## MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

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sciences, you will find that they all go back to the employment of certain concepts—to the formation and use of certain thought-systems—so that the structure of the various sciences is dependent on the nature and power of the intellect. But it is really an absurdity to try to explain the intellect in terms of that which needs the intellect for its explanation.

A third argument against this theory is an argument from the causal relation which it assumes. The theory postulates that brain process produces the various forms of consciousness and yet this consciousness, when it is produced, has no further effect upon the brain—it is simply thrown off from the brain from moment to moment. These gleams of consciousness that are thrown off fade and make way for others. . . . Thus a sequence of mental changes are produced by physiological change, but when produced these do not go on to produce anything else. If, however, you consider the working of causation in any of the other sciences, you will find that every effect in its

## IMMORTALITY

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turn becomes a cause. If anything is produced by anything else, it in its turn becomes a cause producing something else. If I push this glass of water off the desk, my act is the cause, the effect is falling glass. This in its turn becomes a cause and produces a smashing noise which is the effect of the fall, the noise produces some other effect, and so on—there is a continual chain of causation. But according to psycho-physical materialism this does not happen with consciousness. As soon as a conscious state is produced it disappears and is followed by another, produced by another physiological change.

V. We come now to an attempt to get over these difficulties without giving up the belief in the efficacy of brain change and the importance of brain change in every phase and at every moment of conscious life. The theory of psycho-physical materialism does not need much elaboration to become a theory which seems more philosophical, viz., that of *psycho-physical parallelism*. If we say that mental



## MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

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processes, instead of being produced by processes in the cortex, are merely additional properties of these processes, we seem to get over the causal difficulty. We may assert, for example, that change in the occipital cortex, instead of producing vision, is so complex that it carries with it as a part of its nature the consciousness of the object, that is to say, no change of that degree of complexity can occur in my occipital cortex without at the same time having as one of its properties the consciousness of a visual sensation—and so with other parts of the brain. Thus if we represent consciousness by Greek letters and changes in the cortex by English letters, then, according to psycho-physical materialism, A produces  $\alpha$  and also B, B produces  $\beta$  and also C, and so on, but  $\alpha$  does not produce  $\beta$  nor  $\beta$ ,  $\gamma$ , etc. These are simply thrown off by the physiological activity. According to the theory of psycho-physical parallelism, on the other hand, A carries with it essentially and necessarily the further characteristic  $\alpha$ , the psychological process. A- $\alpha$  is

## IMMORTALITY

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one entity, and can go on to produce  $B-\beta$ ;  $B-\beta$  goes on to produce  $C-\gamma$ , and so on. In that way you get over the difficulty of transeunt causation between the physical and the psychical. One does not cause the other—they are two sides of the same thing.

There are many difficulties in the way of this theory. One is that, whereas the physical part of the cerebral cortex is continuous with the rest of the body and so with the physical universe, the psychical side is limited. Only certain parts of the brain are connected with consciousness, yet the psychical is capable of representing the whole world—the world of art, literature, etc.; the part mirrors the whole. You have linked up consciousness with a very small part of your own body, linked it up with it in a very intimate way by making it a property of certain physiological changes, and then you go on to say that consciousness is capable of knowing the whole world. This seems an exceedingly improbable theory, and one which we could hardly accept unless we

## MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

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were forced to do so by very convincing evidence.

VI. An attempt has been made to make the theory more philosophical by making it a form of a general system of Idealism. According to this form of psycho-physical parallelism, the reality is consciousness. These conscious processes constitute *the reality*. The brain processes with which they are linked up are not something additional, but are the way in which one consciousness appears to another. At the present moment you cannot look into my mind, but you could conceivably look into my brain. If my skull were opened and a special apparatus were invented by means of which my cerebral cortex became visible under a very powerful microscope, conceivably you could see my cerebral cortex working. Nevertheless you would not be seeing what I see—you would not see my consciousness, say, of this light and this green lamp-shade, at which I am looking, you would simply see movements of molecules in my occipital cortex. There are not two things

## IMMORTALITY

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present, my consciousness and the changes in the cerebral cortex, but the former appears to you under the form of the latter. And so, according to this theory of psycho-physical idealism, the consciousness of any person is the reality of his cerebral cortex. But if this is so, what becomes of the reality of the rest of his brain and of the rest of his body? According to this theory, the consciousness corresponding to that is a wider consciousness—it is the consciousness of the whole universe. The whole physical universe is in its reality mental, spiritual. It obeys certain laws, the Law of the Conservation of Energy, etc., and is differentiated into a number of centres—conscious individuals—within an All-inclusive Consciousness, which corresponds to the entire physical universe. The consciousnesses of men and animals are related to the Absolute Consciousness just in the same way as the cerebral cortex in man and in the animals is related to the rest of their body and to the rest of the physical world. This is the theory of *Psycho-physical*

## MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

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*Idealism.* It is more satisfying than parallelism, but it involves grave assumptions, and, in a way, wipes out all possibility of survival after death, for we know that the brain disintegrates at death, and, if consciousness is related to certain changes in the brain, we may assume that the individual consciousness comes to an end when the brain does. I could discuss this point further, but time does not permit.

VII. This theory is becoming more and more unsatisfactory, even to those who were once most enthusiastic in its support. We come next to the theory of *interaction*—a theory held by people of all nations at all stages of history. The mind is distinct from the brain ; the brain is the organ of the mind ; the two interact with one another. In our more passive states the brain acts on the mind ; in our more active aspects of consciousness it is the mind that acts on the brain. When I will to move my arm, my mind is acting on the motor centre of my brain, producing a change there, and this is conducted down the nerve fibres to the muscles

## IMMORTALITY

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of my arm, and my arm moves. In the earlier form of the theory it was thought that all nerve fibres converged to one point in the brain, which was the seat of the soul. Descartes thought that the pineal gland, which was the only unpaired organ he knew of, was the seat of the soul. Later research has, of course, shown that there is no one point where all fibres meet, so that a soul cannot come into relation with a brain at any one point. Lotze got over this difficulty by saying that the soul is where it acts—in the occipital cortex, temporal cortex, and so on. . . .

VIII. This theory has not been very popular with philosophers, because it assumes interaction between two orders of existences that are so very different from one another, *i.e.* interaction between matter and mind. According to the ordinary views of the nature of matter and mind which have been handed down to us, matter is extended in space; mind, on the other hand, is not extended, is not in space, in fact, roughly speaking, we hold the view that :

## MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

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“What is mind? No matter! What is matter? Never mind!” We have so divided up the universe into matter and mind that the two are mutually exclusive. The one has just those properties which the other does not possess. But if you take that view of matter and mind you will have a very serious difficulty in bringing the two together at all, and if you believe that the one can act upon the other, and try to think this out, you will find it very difficult to do so. I will ask you to consider this question in the light of the ordinary views of mind and matter: change in my occipital cortex can only be thought of as a form of matter in motion. However advanced you may be as a physicist in your view of the nature of matter and of material change, you will find that you are thinking of something absolutely different from the visual sensation which the experiencing individual will have at the moment. However you envisage the changes in my cortex, as material they will be absolutely different from the consciousness I have, for instance, of this

## IMMORTALITY

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green lamp-shade. There seems to be no resemblance between the two, so that if you say that the one produces the other, you are saying something that may perhaps be accepted as a statement, but that cannot be thought out. If you consider the theories about the physical world in any of the sciences, you will find that the theories about any subject-matter are of such a nature that the mind can pass smoothly and easily from one thing to another. In Physics, for example, if you are considering any change that occurs, say the heat that is generated when a mass of metal is rubbed against another mass of metal (suppose I take a brass button and rub it on this desk—the button becomes hot), Physics will enable your mind to pass from the one phenomenon to the other quite easily and smoothly, for Physics says that matter is made up of small particles which oscillate about a mean position, and the heat of the button will correspond to the frequency or the amplitude of the oscillations. If you rub the button against the desk you increase the molecular motion



## MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

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and the particles vibrate at a greater rate or with greater amplitude. Thus the mind passes from one fact to the other, and can thus use the causal concept, for there are quantitative relations between cause and effect. But in a causal relation between physical and psychical you have nothing of that sort. You have simply a sort of pre-established harmony. You cannot show that certain physical changes *must* produce certain mental changes.

Another objection to the theory is that the Principle of the Conservation of Energy is violated. According to this principle the sum-total of energy in the universe is constant whatever changes may occur in it. If, however, physical changes in the brain can act on the mind and produce mental changes, you will have loss of energy from the physical system, and again, at the moment of an exertion of the will, energy will pass from the mind into the brain. But it has been pointed out as regards this objection, that the principle is merely a generalisation of a statement about finite and

## IMMORTALITY

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closed systems. What has been definitely proved is that if you take a finite and closed system, surrounded by non-conducting walls, then, if you assume changes to go on inside such a chamber, whatever the changes may be, you will find at the end, if you measure the total amount of energy inside, that the amount of energy will be the same as at the beginning, if no energy has passed out through the walls. If you generalise this, you simply get the result that all finite and closed systems obey the Principle of the Conservation of Energy. You can extend this result to the whole physical universe, if that is a finite and closed system. But, as Professor Ward has pointed out, we have no right to make the assumption that the whole physical universe is a finite and closed system, and, if it is not, this principle does not apply to the whole universe, and therefore does not invalidate our argument for psycho-physical interaction.

These are the two main arguments against psycho-physical interaction, taking "matter"

## MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

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and "spirit" in their usual connotations. The arguments in favour of interaction are many.

IX. One is the argument from the character of the unity of consciousness. Consciousness is a unity; on the other hand, the cerebral cortex, which is in direct relation with consciousness, is not by any manner of means a unity, and it is difficult to imagine the changes occurring in different parts of the cortex ever producing a consciousness which is a unity, or being the other aspect of a unitary consciousness. You can only explain the compounding of the multiplicity of changes in the different parts of the cortex if you believe in a unitary soul. (Lotze's argument.) Two forces can combine their results to produce a unitary result, but only if they meet at a point.

If you use what is called the parallelogram of forces as an illustration you need a point of psycho-physical interaction, and this point is given you in the unity of the soul, although there is no unity on the physical side. (The

## IMMORTALITY

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parallelism, however, would say that there is a unity of the brain too. But we have to remember that only a small part of the brain is in direct relation to consciousness.)

Another argument for interaction is the argument from the biological principle of utility. Consciousness would only have evolved if it had been of use to the organism, for : Nothing has evolved which has not been of use to the organism ; consciousness has evolved ; therefore we may assume that consciousness has been of use to the organism, and we cannot conceive how this can be the case without the hypothesis of interaction. For, if consciousness is only the other side of brain activity, it is difficult to see how it can have been of use. This is an objection to psycho-physical materialism, but not so much to psycho-physical parallelism. It is not an objection to psycho-physical idealism because there the reality is the consciousness, only this has different degrees of intensity and has collected, as it were, around different centres of unity. Thus this argument

## MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

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from biological utility is not particularly helpful to psycho-physical interaction.<sup>1</sup>

The theory of interaction allows the possibility of immortality.

X. I come now to a different kind of theory altogether. Those which I have been describing are theories which have taken our ordinary concepts of matter and mind at their face value, and have tried to bring the two together. Bergson, an extremely acute thinker, has devoted an entire book ("Matter and Memory") to this question of the relation of mind to brain, and has dealt with it in a new way. He has first asked himself the question, What exactly is matter and what is mind? Of course philosophers had asked themselves that question before, but Bergson tries to start from a psychological point of view. He realises that the basis of our knowledge of the material world is perception, and so he starts his enquiry

<sup>1</sup> A more convincing argument, on similar lines, is that from the fact of *hedonic selection*, which is urged by Dr. W. McDougall in his "Physiological Psychology" and "Body and Mind."

## IMMORTALITY

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by an investigation into the nature of perception and gives us a theory of perception before he passes on to the theory of the psycho-physical relation. Instead of accepting the view that the universe is neither coloured nor sounding nor having any of the characteristics of sense and that the mind has all these characteristics, he holds the view that matter has all the properties we see in it. The only difference between matter as we see it and matter as it is in itself is that we see only a small part—it is a difference of part and whole. The nervous system is built up of sensory and motor fibres with a view to reaction, to adaptation to environment, and the sense organs play a part in that. They receive stimuli from outside and produce reaction. We see any particular object as it is, but we do not see all of it, we only see just those characteristics to which we can react. When I look at this lamp-shade I get certain visual sensations. I see that the shade is green ; it has the tactile properties I should find if I stretched out my hand and touched it. They are not

## MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

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produced through the interaction between the object and my mind nor through the interaction between the changes in my cerebral cortex, aroused by the stimulus, and my mind. I see the object as it is, because my nervous system is so built that I am able to react to whatever comes within the scope of my vision. In what is called "pure" perception, which is a moment of experience, the nervous system serves to put us in direct relationship with any particular object we are perceiving. We see in the object itself just that part of it to which we can react, so that pure perception is virtually action—it is the reflection, as it were, of the object in ourselves, the reflection of our power of action upon the object. The object possesses many other characteristics, but our body is not developed enough to enable us to react to them, and so we are not aware of them. Changes are not first produced by the object in our organs of sense and then brought to the cerebral cortex, where further changes produce awareness of the object, but our mind is in direct

## IMMORTALITY

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relation with the object through a physical system. It is not that the cortical system acts on our mind and produces consciousness of the object (that is the theory of representation). When we see the object we do not see it through a veil of representation, we see it *as it is*. But, Bergson says, in ordinary perception we have something more than pure perception. Pure perception is a moment of experience, but actually perception takes some time at least, for what happens is that memory comes into play and we summate a number of rapidly successive views of the object in our consciousness. Memory is of the nature of spirit ; perception in itself is physical<sup>1</sup>—it is simply a physical way of bringing physical bodies into relation with my body and so with my mind—but memories are a part of the mind itself. In

<sup>1</sup> But pure perception is also *conscious* perception, because of the *indetermination* involved in perceptual reaction to the environment, as compared with the fixed and inevitable response which occurs in spinal reflex action. Its consciousness is a measure of freedom of choice of alternative modes of motor response.



## MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

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ordinary perception memory comes into play, so that one gets more than perception—one gets a sort of cinematograph summation of instantaneous views of the object. Thus what science proves to us to be rapid vibrations seem to us to be, say, a colour. This lamp-shade seems to me to be green because my memory has summated a whole number of rapid vibrations which physical science proves constitute the colour. If my mind could be so slowed down that it could count the successive vibrations, I should see the shade as a series of vibrations, which is more like what the physicist says it is. This summation of vibrations results from the action of memory. Theoretically, however, pure perception is absolutely distinct from memory. “Pure” memory is absolutely unconscious. What we call memories are memories on their way to perception. In all the parts of our consciousness, so far as they are conscious, earlier memories come in and find a connection with the same motor system which is a continuation of our present percep-

## IMMORTALITY

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tion. Our present perception is a continuous process, passing over into physical reaction to the object. Our conscious life is a result of the working of that perception, together with unconscious memories which insert themselves into the series of motor reactions which serve for our perceptual activity. Those memories come to the surface at any moment which fit in with the motor prolongation of our present perceptual experience. According to this theory *the brain is merely a motor organ*. It has sensory centres as well as motor centres, but they are all linked up with the physical environment and the mind is something absolutely distinct from the brain. The reason why the two—matter and mind—seem so distinct and why it is so difficult to relate them to one another is that we have not done full justice to either. Matter, we have said, is extended in space. It has no intensity, no energy, but is quantitative only. We have given all the other, qualitative, properties to mind. The same qualities, Bergson says, are in both. You can

## MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

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bridge the gap between the quantity of matter and the quality of mind if you adopt the theory of a difference of tension, of rhythm or rate of moving, between matter and mind. Our minds move at a certain rhythm, a rhythm which condenses thousands of millions of vibrations into a single moment, and this is why in a single psychological moment we see colour instead of seeing vibrations. Bergson says that both we and the physicist are right, and if we could slow down our mental process, so that the vibrations were separate one from another, we should see them as vibrations. The colour would gradually become more and more "diluted," though it would never disappear completely. There is a transition between the objects of physical science and psychical sensations—the difference is a difference of degree, not of kind. "Pure" memory is not directly related to the brain; there are no memory centres in the brain. Bergson has various arguments to bring forward in support of this contention: Firstly, if we believe that memory is lodged in the brain, the

## IMMORTALITY

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theory we should hold would be that perceptions, when they occur, leave traces in the brain which, when re-excited, produce corresponding memories. But he points out, as psychologists have noticed again and again, that the power of perception in a certain sphere can be lost though the corresponding memories remain and the power of memory can be lost while the perceptions remain. Again, he points out the great distinction of pure memory from rote memory, which he identifies with habit. In learning a lesson by heart, we build up a motor mechanism having all the works of a habit.

“ Like a habit, it is acquired by the repetition of the same effort. Like a habit, it demands first a decomposition and then a recomposition of the whole action. Lastly, like every habitual bodily exercise, it is stored up in a mechanism which is set in motion as a whole by an initial impulse, in a closed system of automatic movements which succeed each other in the same order and, together, take the same length of time. The memory of each several reading, on

## MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

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the contrary, the second or the third for instance, has *none* of the marks of a habit. Its image was necessarily imprinted at once on the memory, since the other readings form, by their very definition, other recollections. It is like an event in my life ; its essence is to bear a date, and consequently to be unable to occur again." (" Matter and Memory," pp. 89, 90.)

This distinction is absolutely essential for Bergson's theory of memory. Corresponding to it he finds two distinct kinds of recognition, one entirely mechanical, based on the working of pre-formed motor mechanisms, the other starting from memories, among which the mind places itself by an act *sui generis*, at a bound, and working back to the perceptual and motor plane of the present. Cases of " mental blindness," or loss of the power of recognition, whether visual or auditory, are not due to a real loss of the corresponding memories, but to injury or obstruction of the motor mechanisms which give these memories the opportunity of being realised as supplementary parts of an

## IMMORTALITY

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actual perception. The facts of psychopathology, especially those of *aphasia* in all its forms, seem to support this view.

Bergson's view, then, is that memory is spirit, and that all our memories remain in our mind from the earliest times, as a series in time, although in a condition of complete interpenetration, the characteristic of each memory being its particular date—it occurs at one moment and not at another, and those we use come up because of their relationship to our present needs. There is no such thing as a real loss of memory resulting from brain lesion ; a pathological change in the brain simply prevents the memories from actualising themselves. Memories are unconscious, but if the motor mechanism of the brain is excited they may come to the mind as conscious memory. If the mechanism is out of order, then the memories cannot come to the surface. This does not mean that they are lost, but simply that they are in abeyance—they are there from the beginning of time.

XI. I come now to a number of facts which seem to bear out his theory that memory is there from the earliest times. It has recently been observed in a large number of cases of loss of memory following on shock that these memories can be brought back quickly and completely by the use of hypnosis. If we go further and put the patient into a deep hypnotic state, we can bring up memories from any part of his life, if he is a satisfactory subject. We can make him go back to his various birthdays, which were definite moments in his life. We can make him go back as early as his first year, and can get him to go back again and again and find that the same memories come up on successive occasions.

XII. The question may now be asked, how far definite facts of this kind throw light upon the survival of the mind after the death of the body. If we accepted the theories of psychophysical parallelism or of automatism we should be inclined to put aside all evidence for continued existence of the mind as fallacious. But

## IMMORTALITY

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if we adopt the theory of psycho-physical interaction, at any rate the door is left open to us and we feel that there is nothing on that side to hinder us, as long as our facts are reliable and are gained in a reliable way. Of course for a long time now the Society for Psychological Research and people working independently of that Society have been bringing forward fact after fact, system after system, in favour of the continued existence of mind after death. I would call your attention to that system of "cross-correspondence" that was thought to be observed many years ago in regard to messages supposed to be coming from disincarnate intelligences to human organisms. The difficulty of demonstrating the mental origin of such messages is due to the existence of the alternative theory of telepathy. Telepathy is the power that one mind has of acting upon another mind otherwise than through the medium of the senses. Many people have denied the existence of telepathy. It does not always occur when it is expected or hoped for,



## MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

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and you have to take each case on its own merits, but if you do that you find that there is an enormous mass of evidence for telepathy—one incarnate mind acting on another incarnate mind. In hypnosis telepathy is increased and quite astounding results are sometimes obtained. But this theory may be used to explain a great deal that might previously have been explained in terms of the action of outside spirits upon the body. This system of cross-correspondence, for instance, was thought to have been devised by F. W. H. Myers after his death to give evidence to which the argument of telepathy would not apply. It was given to people in two different parts of the world. Mutilated messages were coming through to Mrs. Holland in India, whilst a lady in Cambridge was also getting mutilated messages, and it was found that when put together these messages made definite sense, and seemed to be a message coming from (I believe) F. W. H. Myers—at any rate from someone who had passed over. This method seems to be admirably adapted

## IMMORTALITY

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to prove the existence of outside intelligences without telepathy coming into play, as neither of the people in question had any knowledge of the real message, so that one could not have passed it on to the other by telepathy. The criticism one could bring against this is, firstly, that there might be some third person living who was thinking some message, different parts of which might go to two different people. This objection, of course, is rather trivial. Another objection is that one can easily overestimate the coherence of these messages. They seem to fit together, but what they actually state is not very much, and it may be by mere chance that two such mutilated messages when brought together seem to make sense. If you take any two mutilated messages and bring them together you will find that they make more sense than each one does by itself. This is the sort of objection that would carry some weight.

XIII. The facts, however, are innumerable, and these facts claim to prove the continued existence of mind after death. What I wish to

## MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

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do is to warn those of you who are not acquainted with the facts of pathological psychology that many facts of this kind can be explained in other ways. You have to be prepared to discount such facts in the light of pathological psychology. If, for instance, you hypnotise a good patient, and then suggest to him that he will see something that is going on a long way off, you will find that he will see what is happening, say, at home. He will see it as a dream, perhaps, but the peculiarity of the dream will be that it goes on at the ordinary rate of experience (not very rapidly, as we conceive our dreams to do). He will see, say, his wife at the wash-tub, sewing, in the kitchen—will see her sit down and write a letter, and will be able to read the letter she has written. He will be able to go about from room to room of the house and will seem to see everything, and at the end, when he wakes up, he will say that he is quite certain that he has been at home. You can do that with dozens of patients. You might say that it is just a matter of tele-

## IMMORTALITY

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pathy. If it is telepathy we should presume that there was telepathy between the individual and, say, his wife ; but you must note that he also sees things going on in other parts of the house, where his wife is not, and this might lead you to make the further hypothesis that it is an external spirit which helps the individual to see what is going on.

But it must be noted that these results do not always correspond with what is actually taking place. Now and then one does get coincidences, but in quite a large number of cases one finds that what the patient sees is something which has not happened at all, something which could not have been happening at that time and which has no relation to anything that the person thought about was doing, or might have been doing. One feels forced to believe that, in most of the instances, the patient's mind has become so suggestible that the thought, say, of home brings up automatically certain characteristics of his home, and then the mind improvises as it goes along,

## MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

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and goes along at a definite rate. If one finds certain correspondences afterwards, if these are few and are not characterised by any special incident, they must be held to be contradicted by the other facts which do not correspond. Note the proviso, however, for it is very important. You may find that when the patient sees what actually does occur he is in a much more excited state and feels much more convinced of the genuineness of his experience than when he does not see what actually occurs. This should be noted if it occurs. As far as I can discover there is not much evidence of this kind. Taking all these cases as on the same level, one may say that they are simply false percepts due to suggestion.

Such facts at any rate show how careful we need to be, for, after all, a lot of the work of mediums is simply the result of what seems to come to them automatically, either by word of mouth or through automatic writing, and it is quite conceivable that the medium may be in a state where suggestion works automatically and

## IMMORTALITY

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where the mind improvises. Automatic writing, for instance, will often bring up memories from earlier life that cannot be restored in other ways. Dr. Morton Prince has described the case of a girl who was very frightened of cats. He hypnotised her very deeply in order to try to get back the original memory which would explain why she feared cats, but he failed to do so. But when he put a pencil into her hand, the hand automatically wrote a detailed account of a fright she had had when she was five years old, when a white kitten had had a fit in her arms. Such cases are common in this rather shadowy land of the occult. We can bring back memories from the earlier life of a hypnotised subject, and such memories are often extremely accurate and seem to bear out Bergson's view. But other memories are not so accurate. I remember one patient I had who described his christening with great detail. The padre, however, made independent enquiries and had the register looked up, and it was found that he had been christened much

## MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

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later than he thought (viz., when he was two or three years old, and not when he was six months old, as he declared), so that this particular bit of evidence fell to the ground. It was simply imagination. Again one of my patients was supposed to see someone related to me, when he was in a hypnotic trance. He gave me a very circumstantial account of the scene—he could see them on the pier at Brighton—could see this, that and the other. My corporal took down the account. I knew, however, that it was not true, and later on it came out that it was a memory of a time the patient himself had once spent at Brighton. You will find instances of this sort occurring again and again.

In mentioning these facts I do not want to cast any doubt on the results of scientific investigations into spiritism—I have no right to do that—I merely wish to sound a note of caution, to suggest that all this borders very closely on the realm of pathological psychology, and that in such investigations you need to be

## IMMORTALITY

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quite sure that the mind concerned is a normal one—and for this you need to make investigations of other kinds. I do not say that all mediums are pathological cases, but in any case it is obvious that the medium should be investigated from that point of view, and that people who are not educated in pathological psychology are not likely to be such reliable witnesses as people who have made investigations along this line. You really need, it seems to me, to have stored in your minds a lot of facts of pathological psychology, so that you can discount any possibility of this kind. But when one reads the literature relating to these facts, however anxious one is to be convinced of the evidence for continued existence—and no one could be more anxious for this than I am—one feels that one can never be quite convinced unless one can see the case for oneself, for one does not find sufficient details to be quite sure that the states described are not simply pathological mental states, rather than something that is completely normal.



## MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

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The subject bristles with difficulties—I suppose it is the most difficult subject there is—and one feels that one needs a knowledge of a large number of sciences in order to be able to estimate the data satisfactorily. The verdict of modern psychology is in favour of the possibility of a future life. Proofs of its certainty are still to seek.



THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION TO  
THE CONCEPTION OF ETERNAL LIFE

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## ANALYSIS

I. INTRODUCTION.

II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE INCARNATION. ETERNAL  
LIFE LIVED IN THE MIDST OF TIME.

III. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST, HIS  
DEATH, RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION.

IV. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE  
IN CHRIST.

V. PERSONAL IMMORTALITY :

(a) The Communion of the Soul with God.

(b) The Resurrection of the Body.

VI. THE COMMUNITY OF FINITE SPIRITS.

VII. THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION IN THE LIGHT OF  
RECENT PHILOSOPHICAL SPECULATION.

# THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION TO THE CONCEPTION OF ETERNAL LIFE

## I. *Introduction.*

Our task is not to prove the Christian doctrine of Eternal Life but to state it, to deduce its implications, and thus to commend it as one amongst other rival theories of Immortality.

Perhaps we shall best approach the exposition of the distinctive contribution of Christianity by a consideration of what it is not.

1st. Eternal Life for the Christian does not mean that we shall continue to live in the memory of our friends and within the recollection of historians and searchers after the antique, long subsequent to the time when we ourselves have ceased to be. The thought suggested, for example, in George Eliot's idea of a "Choir Invisible" or in Maeterlinck's "Blue

## IMMORTALITY

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Bird ”—where the dead come to life again if and when they are remembered—falls far short of the fringe of the Christian belief.

2nd. We do not believe in a mere continuance within the life of the race after the individual has perished. We do not look simply for a racial survival, where the persistence of the type compensates for the death of the single being. “The spiritual continuity of the family” after we are gone, a survival in the memory of posterity, or the assurance that our good deeds will abide as a contribution, however slight, towards the sum treasures of an advancing humanity ; an immortality of fame or, as in the case of most of us, an immortality of deserved oblivion,—these anæmic substitutes for the rich content of the Christian teaching are cold comfort.

3rd. Eternal Life is not to be confounded with the Greek belief in the immortality of the soul or with the Eastern pantheistic yearning for absorption into God. It is rather by contrast with these two last conceptions that the dis-

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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tinctive characteristics of the Christian teaching may best be studied and appreciated.

Man's speculations and ideas concerning the world to come have been determined mainly by his conception of God, and the belief in immortality has grown with the development of the religious consciousness. The Christian contribution, therefore, is found expressed not in intellectual, æsthetic, or even moral concepts, but primarily, essentially, and fundamentally, in religious and spiritual terms. Eternal Life for the Christian is Life with God, and an immortality without God would be Eternal Death. Such an existence as this last is quite conceivable and strong arguments can be adduced in favour of it as against the thought of annihilation, but life without God for the Christian is Hell, and we do not propose to consider it here, except in so far as it is thought of in contrast to the positive conception of Heaven. One of the tasks before us is to substitute for the traditional pictures of Heaven and Hell, conceptions corresponding more

## IMMORTALITY

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really and vitally to our moral and spiritual instincts, as the result of our deepened knowledge of the Being and Character of God, revealed to us in Christian history and experience. We have outgrown the traditional phraseology, in that we have in times past lost touch with the spiritual content which that phraseology was meant to convey. We have substituted literal prose for poetic imagery. We have endeavoured to elaborate in great detail the beauty or the ugliness of the husk and lost sight of the kernel. A recovery of the spiritual content by sensitive souls has led to a growing dissatisfaction with the traditional form, and a desire to substitute a new form, less liable to misinterpretation and more adequate to reclothe the spiritual truth recovered. Whether a better picture of the reality for which Heaven stands, than that suggested by the Apocalypse of a "Blessed Home," can be discovered, remains to be seen. Certainly a glance, for example, at Dean Farrar's "Eternal Hope" with the quotations there given of the



## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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ideas of various writers concerning "Heaven" and "Hell" shows to what a lamentable misuse the terms can be put. Such pictures explain the revolt and amply justify the attitude of the average man to-day, who neither believes in the existence of such places nor, if they do exist, has any ardent desire to make their nearer acquaintance. Let it not be thought, however, that a revolt against names destroys the reality for which those names stand. I am, personally, as convinced of the reality behind the word "Hell" as I am of the truth conveyed by the word "Heaven." The great Italian seer, Dante, divided his subject into three parts, corresponding to three great truths, "Hell," "Purgatory," "Paradise." In this he may yet prove to have been nearer to the truth than the modern mind is inclined to admit. What we can do to-day is to lay the stress upon the spiritual truths these words are meant to teach.

The whole emphasis, therefore, in this lecture, will fall upon the ethical and spiritual impli-

## IMMORTALITY

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cations in the Christian doctrine. We are freer now to discard the Oriental imagery and the materialisation of the spiritual which has occupied so large a place in popular conceptions of what the Church is supposed to teach on the subject of Eternal Life. It is clear that any attempt to describe a spiritual reality in terms of human language must involve the clothing of the truth in imagery borrowed from the thought-forms of our existence in time and space. We think of Heaven as a place only because no image we try to form of the spiritual reality can escape a spatial and temporal setting in our minds. Our only hope of entering more fully into the depths of the spiritual significance of the Christian teaching will be to lift the whole subject out of its material setting into the realm of moral and spiritual values ; to consider it as a relationship between the finite spirit and God, a state of being rather than a position in a locality.

In this we shall find ourselves fully in accord with our Lord's own method. He clothed the

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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material imagery in men's minds of the Other World with a deep and rich content.<sup>1</sup> Nothing is more significant than the gulf separating the pre-Christian Apocalyptic from our Lord's Eschatological teaching; the contrast between the crude materialism of the Jewish hope and the ethical and spiritual character of Christ's Kingdom. The Christian teaching has its roots in Old Testament Eschatology. Its special setting within the circle of other distinctively Christian truths marks it apart, however, as something more than a mere synthesis of previous beliefs derived from Jewish and Greek sources.

Christianity claims that the religious consciousness—with which the doctrine of immortality is largely bound up—has reached its deepest and purest experience of God in Christ Jesus and differs not in degree but in kind from that of the worshipper who sought communion

<sup>1</sup> In the teaching of our Lord on the meaning of the Kingdom we have what Prof. von Dobschütz has aptly called "transmuted eschatology."

## IMMORTALITY

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with the Supreme Being before the day of Pentecost.

If, as we hold, the union of the human and the Divine in the Person of Christ enabled the Divine Spirit *for the first time* to enter fully into human personality, a more intimate and close association of man with God has been made possible as the result of the Incarnation and Work of Christ. The Coming of the Holy Ghost—the return of the Divine Spirit into a redeemed humanity—was creative of a *new order* of religious experience. It constituted a new phenomenon in the long history of the soul's quest for God. It resulted in a changed relationship between the human spirit and the Divine Spirit, realised first in the Person of Christ and subsequently in the Christian life hid with Christ in God. This is of immense significance when we come to study more closely the specific Christian experience of God in Christ Jesus, as constituting the content of Eternal Life here and hereafter.

Let us further note that the Scriptural Anthro-

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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pology begins with God, and in the light of His relationship to man as Creator and Redeemer, deduces its doctrine of the origin, constitution, significance, value and destiny of human nature.

The Christian Eschatology cannot be studied in isolation from this circle of religious ideas and its true significance is only seen in its setting within the whole body of revealed truth concerning God and Man contained in Christianity.

We propose, therefore, to consider more closely the significance of the Incarnation; Christ's revelation of the Being and Character of God; the Life and Work of Christ, His Resurrection and Ascension—so far as these throw light upon the distinctive features of the Christian conception of Eternal Life.

We shall pass on to study the Christian experience in Christ, as illustrated in the Pauline and Johannine theology. We shall then be in a better position to face the question of Personal Immortality and the significance of the Resurrection Body in this connection. The problem of the Kingdom and the Individual—

## IMMORTALITY

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Heaven as a Community of spirits—will lead us finally to the question to what extent the Christian ideas on these subjects are in accord with the best philosophical speculations of our day.

### II. *The Significance of the Incarnation. Eternal Life lived in the midst of time.*

The Christian contribution to the doctrine of Eternal Life cannot be dissociated from our belief in the Being and Character of God revealed in the Incarnation. For the Christian this is a revelation of God in terms of Human life, a revelation of Eternal Life in time and space. We have no need, therefore, to speculate as to its content. If we ask in what does Eternal Life consist, the answer God has given us is seen in a miracle of Divine humiliation and self-sacrificing Love—a demonstration of God's Essence as Eternal Giver—Love spending itself freely and without stint in the service of men.

Now what does this mean? If Eternal Life

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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is God's Life, and, for us, Life in God, it is revealed to be, in His case, *not* a sublime self-satisfaction, not an existence into which no pain of finitude or suffering incident to our terrestrial life enters, but a life with a Cross in it, and this because sacrifice is involved in the very nature of God Himself. We see in Christ Jesus, God giving Himself, willing to bear the burden of our finite existence, suffering with us, energising and active within our human nature against all that renders life for us a thing of dark shadows. We see in Him the embodiment of a victorious Spirit wrestling with sin and death. God for the Christian is thus known to be no exalted Impassible Deity, separated by an unbridgable gulf from the world ; no impersonal Absolute, untouched and untouchable by the world's pain, but One whose Love necessitates His willingness to share our infirmities, to work in us for our redemption, to achieve through us man's conquest of the many ills that flesh is heir to. If the Life of God thus revealed is of this kind, then for us also Heaven is no state of

## IMMORTALITY

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ease and selfish enjoyment, no self-centred existence. If God's Nature is the Omnipotence of Love, man's Heaven must be made of the same "stuff," *i.e.*, it consists in sharing to an ever fuller degree a life of self-sacrifice and service within a Community bound together in union and communion with God. God's Incarnate Life reveals to us in what Reality consists. This is its significance for our enquiry—a revelation of what Eternal Life really is as lived by God within the limits of human life and, therefore, of the kind of life it is possible for men to live here and now, and, living it, to taste of Eternal Life in time and space.

Can we analyse its content still further? I think we can, if we study it as Christ lived it and as we experience it in Him.

### III. *The Significance of the Life of Christ, His Death, Resurrection, and Ascension.*

The Godward side of the Incarnate Life is one beyond our grasp except so far as we are



## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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afforded glimpses into a life the outstanding feature of which is a God-consciousness as startling as is the Christ-consciousness of St. Paul. For Jesus, communion with God is so intimate, so vitally part of His being, so uninterrupted and continuous, unclouded and untainted, as to differ not in degree but in kind from that of any recorded intercourse of the human soul with God. In this He stands alone in a unique relationship to God, unshared in its depths by any mortal. Justice is only done to its significance when we have named it an ontological relationship, a unity of Being, which constitutes, not similarity or affinity, but identity of Essence between Himself and God. He is Son in His own right and claims the Father as His in a sense never before or since experienced or shared by the saints in the long history of the soul's quest after fulness of Communion with God. The position thus accorded Him places Him within the supra-mundane world and within the sphere of the Eternal at any and every moment of His

## IMMORTALITY

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earthly life. That is to say that for Him Eternal Life was no future inheritance, nor the promise of a fuller abidingness hereafter than that at present experienced. Whilst therefore we recognise in His Life an experience of Eternal Life realised in spite of spatial and temporal conditions, we cannot go on to claim for ourselves a like richness of Eternal Life here and now. We have to draw a distinction between His experience of Eternal Life and ours. If we draw this distinction in terms indicated by Baron von Hügel in his masterly exposition ("Eternal Life," pp. 231-2) we shall say that Eternity, full Abidingness is known to God in Christ and Christ in God alone. That further

"this full Eternity is not, and never will be, man's own; and also that such experience as he has of it is never pure and separate, but ever of it only in, through, and over against, his various, ever more or less successive, directly human experiences."

When, however, we turn to the manward side of Christ's Life, viewed as a presentation of

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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Eternal Life lived in time and under terrestrial conditions, we see that it has a twofold aspect and content. It derives its power from the heavenly sphere and it expresses itself in self-sacrificing devotion to the service of men. Christ is in the world and yet not of it. But being "not of it" does not mean for Him a mere quietism, achieved in solitary isolation and negative asceticism. His is essentially an active life of well-doing. "Other-worldliness" is the key to the secret of its strength and inspiration, but this world is the sphere of its activity. In it is seen the consecration of all human life, the ideal pattern of the truly human revealed by the presence and inspiration of the Divine in it.

Now if we watch this life of Christ as it unfolds itself before us in the pages of the Gospels, we see it fixing upon all that makes our human existence beautiful and sweet. It sets the seal of Divine approval upon just those ethical and spiritual values which men are bidden to prize above gold and rubies. Human love,

## IMMORTALITY

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friendship, purity of heart, nobility of purpose, unselfish devotion, pity for the poor and needy, sympathy in the presence of suffering and the kindly word of counsel in need—these are the things which win the Master's approval and blessing. It is because His life is so intimately associated with these values and this spirit that inevitably He attracts to Himself the best in human life of His day and equally inevitably arouses the active hostility of the world-spirit.

The result is persecution, conflict, an inevitable struggle between Good and Evil, Light and Darkness, Love and Hate. In this struggle the true values of human life are more clearly revealed by contrast, and upon the issue of this struggle will depend the question as to whether things true, pure, honest, of good report, are or are not the real meaning and purpose of God for men's life. The victorious issue in the Resurrection is consequently seen to be God's vindication of all that justifies man's idealism. It is a life triumphant through death over the world-spirit and settles finally for faith the

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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issue of the struggle between the material and the spiritual, the lower and the higher levels, in man's complex nature.

The reality of this struggle is emphasised over and over again in our Lord's teaching and the necessity of man's choice made plain beyond words. The moral issues of life are clearly indicated. Nowhere is this better brought out than in the teaching of the fourth Gospel where we see the world-spirit in its conflict with the Spirit of God, the Kingdom of Darkness in its antagonism to the Kingdom of Light, Satan against God in human life. So in the Apocalypse, Christ's victory is seen to be the triumph of man in the Second Adam, and Faith's conquest of the world is faith's clear insight into the meaning of Calvary's tragedy and the triumphant issue in the Resurrection and Session of Christ at the right hand of God. Good is seen to have survival value. God's last word is not death but life, not an eternal dualism between God and Satan, but the final triumph of the Good and the final defeat of the

## IMMORTALITY

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Bad. If then we ask in what does man's true life consist and what kind of life has survival value, the answer is given in the kind of life Christ lived, which proved triumphant over suffering, pain, and death and received God's Blessing in the Resurrection.

We are introduced to a *qualitative* difference in the content of life here. We are given a choice between a lower and a higher form of existence here with an assurance that the higher has survival value, the lower has not.

Dr. Liddon in one of his sermons ("Easter in St. Paul's," Sermon xxii.) has brought out this contrast in the fourth Gospel very vividly :

"The world is human nature, sacrificing the spiritual to the material, the future to the present, the unseen and eternal to that which touches the senses and which perishes with time" . . .

"It is a mighty flood of thoughts, feelings, principles of action, conventional prejudices, dislikes, attachments, which has been gathering around human life for ages,

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

---

impregnating it, impelling it, moulding it, degrading it" . . .

"It is a great tradition of materialised life to which every age and individual adds its quota."

This is a very vivid picture of the world as the author of the fourth Gospel depicts it and as we ourselves know it. The Christian knows that life on such a level has no promise of futurity, no hope of permanence. It is essentially life divorced from the Spirit of God, if not life in open antagonism to Him. How is it to be overcome? If by a death to it, life on a higher level can be attained here, is this the Eternal Life we are seeking? Christianity answers that it is, and points first to Christ's own life on earth as a proof that a better form of true life can be lived and secondly to the Resurrection as a proof that such a life by contrast has a future before it.

There was no change of purpose in His Life as the result of His Death. He emerged from the grave with the same aims and the same

## IMMORTALITY

---

ideals. His Spirit ever since has steadily striven to inculcate the same lofty enterprise in the hearts of men. His earthly lifetime was guided by one supreme motive—the foundation of the Kingdom. After His Resurrection we do not find Him diverted from this to other issues. What does this mean? Surely that all the young life seemingly prematurely cut off by sudden death will still through its gates emerge with the same goal in view, the same end to be accomplished. Under different conditions, with increased facilities, we may well believe that those who gave their lives in the service of a cause which can be identified in the smallest degree with the Divine Purpose will be found still eager to progress, still willing to endure, still capable of activity for the same end. Life's purposes are not frustrated by death, and any finite centre of ethical and spiritual activity has a future before it of which death cannot rob it. The spirits of just men have still their part to play in the spiritual warfare of which St. Paul draws so vivid and dramatic a picture in the



## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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Epistle to the Ephesians. Christ is still the leader in that struggle. There is war still in Heaven and He does not lack followers there as here.

If it be urged that our thought of the Hereafter is that of a Sabbath *Rest* for the People of God, the answer is that in His case "rest was not quitting the busy career." There is a perfect rest for us within the heart of God, which none the less is intensest activity in His Service. "He watching over Israel, slumbers not nor sleeps." The Christian conception of God in terms of Christ is that of a dynamic activity not a static passivity. So will it be for the Christian. We look not for an attenuated existence but for the "wages of going on."

Such then is the significance of Christ's Life, Death, Resurrection and Ascension as a revelation in time and space of a certain kind of life which can be lived under terrestrial conditions, and which has in it something Death cannot destroy and evil cannot finally conquer.

## IMMORTALITY

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### IV. *The Significance of the Christian Experience in Christ.*

Now when we examine the content of the Christian life in Christ, we find that it consists in just this life on a higher level to which, as we have seen, survival value is attached. There is no conflict between the kind of life Christ demanded as the condition of membership in His Kingdom and the kind of life man strives to live in Christ by the power of the Risen Lord in him. The difference is simply that between an ideal set before men for imitation and man's imperfect realisation of that ideal in his upward struggle towards the Christian standard of life. If we compare our Lord's teaching and example in the Gospel narratives with St. Paul's description of the Christian life hid with Christ in God or the Johannine teaching concerning the meaning of Eternal Life, we shall find that we are dealing with the same thing and, what is of more importance to note, in every case it is a question

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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of the *quality* of the life lived and its relationship to God.

(a) Take St. Paul's experience of the Risen Lord and his teaching concerning the Holy Spirit within him and within the Body of Christ, the community of the redeemed on earth. In what does it consist? It is an experience of a new spiritual power of the Divine within the human personality, mediated through Christ and securing for the believer a changed life. It is the life of the Spirit in us. It is a present possession, an experienced relationship, a felt reality, a life-giving, Grace-bestowing power, able to transform and to transfigure the man, to direct and control the whole life and to fix its purposes and aims in accordance not with man's wishes but with what he feels is God's intention, God's plan for his life, the purpose of Divine Love for him. The life of this Spirit is shared by others within the Community and is the binding link not only of the soul with God but of soul with soul, brother with brother in a realised fellow-

## IMMORTALITY

---

ship, a social organism, a Divine Society. The Christian life is lived within the Kingdom of God into which each one is incorporated by a spiritual birth. This Kingdom is of Divine foundation, a present reality in the world. At the same time it is in the future, as a reward, an achievement, a goal and end of Divine operation, the fulfilment of an Eternal purpose.

It is a lived experience of life on a new level, through a new birth. It is achieved as the result of a Divine movement, with man's co-operation, by way of renunciation, the *Via Negativa*. None the less, it is a life of intense activity within the Society in open antagonism and conflict with all that is Evil and in self-sacrificing devotion to the good of the Whole.

It is not a renunciation as a barren negation of all that makes this life dear, but the consecration at a higher level of all that is deepest and most precious in the life of man. The redeemed are in the world and yet not of it. The Other-worldliness of their life consists in this—That they live in conscious communion with

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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One Whose Presence is a felt reality and whose life is the source and power by which they are enabled to win moral victories, maintain themselves at a higher level of life than that of the world around them, judge accurately the relative value of things material and spiritual, and in all things strive to follow in the steps of the Master.

St. Paul brings out vividly the close union of the believer with Christ which begins with a spiritual experience—justification by faith—and continues in an ever deepening assimilation of the life of God—a progressive sanctification in Christ Jesus. The power of His Resurrection is thus a felt reality in human life.

This experience is not only a power able to change human life here and to fashion anew human character. It also opens out before the eyes of faith a prospect and a possibility of a life hereafter quite different in quality from mere physical survival. There is thus the hope, nay the assurance, of a *blessed* immortality. The blessedness is guaranteed by His redemptive work which has removed the sharpness of death.

## IMMORTALITY

---

Its sting due to sin is withdrawn. The future has no guilty terrors for the soul which trusts in His redeeming love. Beyond the Veil lies the Father's House. The Christian looks not for a life of endless duration, a prolongation indefinitely of mere existence, a reproduction of the conditions and limitations, the hindrances and stumbling-blocks incident to our sinful lives here with the pain of contrast, the guilt of sin, the sense of failure. It is a blessed immortality and already we taste of it here in the joy of forgiveness, the sense of reconciliation, the knowledge that the bonds of human love which link us to those who have passed on before us to the nearer presence of God are stronger than Death and hold for us the promise of reunion in a higher state of life into which the pain of separation cannot enter.

(b) If we turn now from the Pauline to the Johannine conception we find that the writer's whole thought centres in the revelation of Eternal Life manifested in time and space in the Person of the Incarnate whose presence is

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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the Light and Life of men. To have found Him is to have passed from death to life, knowledge of Him is eternal life, obedience to His commands secures this for the believer as a present possession.

(c) Compare this with our Lord's own teaching. The outstanding feature of His eschatology is the Kingdom of God.

It is of Divine origin and a present reality in the world. It takes root deep down in human nature as the result of a Divine operation. It is present fact and future possibility, here and to come, in the present, in the near future, in the eschatological future. It is immanent and transcendent, within the two spheres, the terrestrial and the supra-terrestrial. Its presence is a declaration of war between it and the world-spirit. This warfare is carried on within the individual soul and in the community life. In the individual, it is a New Birth and involves a continuous struggle for the life of the true self as against the false. In society, it finds expression in the striving after a better order.

## IMMORTALITY

---

It has the promise of a final consummation in the individual—the triumph of the true self; in the community—the realisation of the New Jerusalem.

Thus whether we consider our Lord's conception of the Kingdom, or the Pauline conception of the Divine Spirit in Christian experience or the Johannine interpretation of Eternal Life, we are dealing with a reality which is fundamentally the same. It is a life of Divine origin, of ethical and spiritual content, immanent in the individual and the communal life and yet withal transcendent, never fully expressed or realised under terrestrial conditions yet pointing to unlimited possibilities here and hereafter.

What is it? The Divine in human life. The Eternal Life of God as a present possession and a future inheritance for those who have found Christ and are found of Him. No mere futurity of bliss but a present experience. Such reality was revealed in the Incarnate Life of God. Its content is found in Him and its



## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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nature and purpose for us is to be sought in an experience of One who from the depth of His own Nature, *Divine* and *Human*, and therefore with a full knowledge of the meaning of both, said "This is life eternal, that they should know Thee, the only true God, and Him whom Thou didst send." Such life because of its origin and quality is deathless. "Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." It is His Life—Resurrection Life, known in its exhaustless depths by Him alone and yet shared by Christians so far as their imperfect lives approximate to His and so far as they can be said to live in Him and He in them. It is thus a distinctively Christian experience and a foretaste of Heaven. The Redeemed know here something of the Sabbath Rest.<sup>1</sup>

An important conclusion would seem to follow.

<sup>1</sup> The only proof Jesus Himself ever offered of the reality of Eternal Life, apart from His living it Himself, and bringing life and immortality to light in the Gospel, was His clear insistence upon God as the "God of the living" and the consequent guarantee that communion with God was something Death could not destroy.

## IMMORTALITY

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There is a continuity between Eternal Life here and hereafter. Between our experience here of God immanent and our future experience hereafter of God transcendent, there cannot be so vast a gulf as to make the future Beatific Vision different *in toto* from what we know of it now in communion with God in Christ. Here and now we transcend time and space in an act of intense experience of fulness of life.

We look for a progressive realisation in ever increasing measure of this experience, under other conditions more favourable, in a higher form of existence, into which the hindrances and limitations we now know as obstacles to our striving will not enter. Whilst, however, the nature of these new conditions is at present hardly conceivable to our finite minds and "eye hath not seen, nor hath ear heard, nor hath it entered into the mind of man to conceive what the Lord God has prepared for them that unfeignedly love Him"—yet the experience will not be so utterly remote or different in

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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kind from that at present enjoyed, as is sometimes suggested.

Our knowledge of God here and hereafter differs in degree only. Whilst therefore it is true to say that "if we were in the heaven we seek, we should not be in the heaven we want," if our earth-formed pictures of it are blurred distortions of the Reality itself, yet they do give us real knowledge so far as they go. "He hath set eternity in our hearts" here and now.

We have thus, as the result of our enquiry so far, an introduction to a series of ideas essentially religious and carrying with them the validity not only of an historical revelation in the Person of Christ but also of a personal religious experience.

### V. *Personal Immortality.*

What guarantee have we of such a continuity between our Eternal Life experienced here and that to be enjoyed in a larger Hereafter as shall conserve our distinctive personality?

## IMMORTALITY

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Will our individuality, or perhaps we had better say, our Christian personality—that new self which is ours as the result of our communion with Him here—will this which He respects here in our relationship to Him, be preserved?

Now the Christian doctrine of personal immortality has never in its long history been free from an insidious danger of Eastern origin, due to a complete difference of standpoint between Eastern and Western modes of thought. Pantheism is the real foe to the Christian doctrine and over and over again has been confused with it, even amongst Christian thinkers. It derives its strength both from philosophical thought and from certain types of religious experience. In our own day it is associated in our minds with Philosophical Monism and certain phases of Mysticism. In defence of the Christian teaching at this point we would urge two considerations: (1) the experience of communion with God in Christ; (2) the resurrection of the body.

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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### (1) The Communion of the soul with God.

In this Christian experience we have the Divine and the human in closest relationship and union. What is the result? Not the absorption, annihilation, obsession of the human by the Divine, or even the suspicion of the beginning here of such a final consummation. The human personality in its union with the Divine experiences a fuller realisation of its true self as the result of its intensest activity in communion with Another. There is an expansion, elevation, purification, intensification of the human, a shedding of the false self if you like, a truer realisation of the true self, a growth towards the ideal self, but not the loss of anything such as would render it impossible to distinguish it from the Other with Whom it is in communion.

The sense of separation in the midst of the soul's deepest realisation of its affinity with God in the act of communion is the guarantee that He will respect our freedom hereafter as He does now, and preserve for us such a measure

## IMMORTALITY

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of separation from Himself as shall make communion possible. Our end is not Nîrvana, not annihilation, absorption, not a supra-personal or impersonal existence within the Divine, but *Communion*, with its sense of dependence, likeness, need, desire, knowledge of exhaustless possibility of a higher becoming as the result of its vital union with the Eternal Divine Fulness of God. If it were God's purpose to obliterate our single individual personality as a distinct entity over against Himself, then in our present experience of Eternal Life here we should surely begin to feel that such communion with Him was leading to a gradual loss of the sense of our distinctness from Him. There are, it is true, mystic experiences recorded in which the worshipper is described as feeling lost in the vastness of Eternal Being and forgetting the sense of self in the presence of the Over-Soul. Apart, however, from the abnormal character of such experiences, we claim that the true Christian Mystic is most really himself and most truly

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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human in his intensest experience of God. And further, communion is only possible as a relationship between two. If one is absorbed, the communion ceases. And moreover, the Christian belief in the Divine Love gives dignity to human nature and makes us bold to affirm that our individual relationship to God is of value in His sight. He values *my* communion, my love for Him, my imperfect response to His advance. His love for me is my assurance that He will not lightly lose me or blot me out. My communion with Him, because it is *mine*, is unshared and unshareable by any other finite spirit amidst the vast multitude. No one else can take my place or be a substitute for me in the relationship in which I am to God who loves me. The human duplicate has never been made by God, and I, as a finite centre of experience, am unique. Blot me out of creation and humanity in the eyes of Omnipotent Love is lacking. So long as there is one lost sheep in the wilderness the fold is incomplete and no other sheep put there can fill my vacant place.

## IMMORTALITY

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This is the Christian doctrine of the value of the unit and it helps us to combat that persistent attempt to depreciate the value of human personality, the true significance of which seems always liable to slip from the grasp of the Eastern mind and accounts for the strong Pantheistic tendency in all systems, whether religious or philosophical, which are content to search for Reality below the level of the highest we know, namely a truly human personality. This is the strongest argument of Christianity for a belief in personal immortality as against the dream of absorption into God.

Let us examine, however, another line of argument suggested by a consideration of the meaning of the Resurrection Body, the significance of which, perhaps, in this connection has not been sufficiently grasped.

### (2) The Resurrection of the Body.

Westcott ("Gospel of the Resurrection," p. 58 ff) points out that the Resurrection "introduces us to a novel phase of being, of which we feel even in the presence of this revelation that



## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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we can know only a part darkly. For the Resurrection is not like any one of the recorded miracles of raising from the dead. It is not a restoration to the old life, to its wants, to its special limitations, to its inevitable close, but the revelation of a new life foreshadowing new powers of action and a new mode of being. It issues not in death but in the Ascension for which it is the preparation and the condition. It is not an extension of an existence with which we are acquainted, but the manifestation of an existence for which we hope. . . . It is not a withdrawal from men or a laying aside of humanity, complete, final, and immediate, but the pledge of an abiding communion of a Saviour with the fulness of our nature on earth and in heaven. It is not the putting off of the body, but the transfiguration of it. . . . The Lord rose from the grave, and those who had known Him before, knew that He was the same and yet changed. This is the sum of the Apostles' testimony, the new Gospel of the world."

## IMMORTALITY

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Our task here is not to enter fully into a discussion of the vexed question of the nature of the Resurrection Body or the credibility of its existence. Our concern is rather with the spiritual implications of the conception.

If we adopt the words of the 4th Article—"Christ did truly rise again from death, and took again His body, with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith He ascended into heaven and there sitteth,"—as expressing the Christian belief, so far as human language can express a spiritual state and mode of being of which we can form no definite idea which is not clothed in thought-forms derived from our present limited existence in time and space, and, therefore, coloured by these very limitations which do not exist in the case of that we wish to describe, certain conclusions inevitably follow which go to mark the Christian doctrine as distinct and incompatible with other rival theories that have prevailed in the history of human speculation on these matters.

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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*First* we are to look for the Resurrection of the whole man. Christianity parts company definitely and finally from the Greek concept of the Immortality of the Soul and the dualism of Body and Soul.

“ In the Person of Christ we see the whole of man, his body and soul, raised together from the grave. No part is left behind. The whole complex nature is raised and glorified. It is not that the soul only lives, nor yet that the body, such as it was before, is restored to its former vigour. The Saviour, as far as we regard His Manhood, is not unclothed, to use St. Paul’s image, but clothed upon. Nothing is taken away, but something is added by which all that was before present is transfigured. ‘ The corruptible puts on incorruption : the mortal puts on immortality.’ ”

The Redemption of the *whole* man is the pith and substance of this teaching. It cuts at the root of those theories which seek to disparage the body, to despise the material and to foster a false spiritualism which thrives at the

## IMMORTALITY

---

expense of much in man's life which the Incarnation has hallowed and sanctified.

We are taught not to despise the body as a temporarily-indwelt shell from which we may hope to escape with advantage. We are saved from an impossible dualism which exalts soul at the expense of body or a crude materialism which seeks to define the former in terms of the latter. We are reminded that man is a complex whole, that body and soul are strictly contemporaneous in their origin, and have profound and ineffaceable relations to each other. (See Liddon, "Some Elements of Religion," p. 101, pp. 114-115.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> P. 114. "The soul is only severed from the body at death by a violent wrench. Would the soul, permanently severed from the body, still be, properly speaking, man? Would it not really be some other being? . . . If the body did not rise, man would, by dying, not simply enter upon a new stage of being; he would exist as a different order or species of creature. His moral history would have changed its conditions and character."

See further Liddon, "Easter in St. Paul's," Sermon xxiii.

"According to Revelation, death is the disturbance of that union of soul and body which constitutes the complete man. Death thereby introduces a morbid condition of

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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So the Christian teaching is :

(a) That the body is essential to man's completeness whether in this or a future life.

(b) That the body is not the governing element in man's nature. It is a body of humiliation.

(c) A flood of glory has been shed on it and it has great prospects, a splendid future. Our nature as a whole has been ennobled as well as invigorated by the Son of God.

“ Bending, in the immensity of His Love, from the throne of heaven, He has taken it upon Him in its integrity, body and soul alike, and joined it by an indissoluble union to His own Eternal Person. . . .

“ Forasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, He likewise Himself took part in the same.”

“ We shall die as do the creatures around us ; whether by violence or by slow decay.

existence, a strictly abnormal separation of the two constitutive parts of our being ; and this irregular interruption of the true life of man ends at the Resurrection, when man re-enters upon the original completeness of his existence.”

## IMMORTALITY

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But He will gather up what death has left, and will transfigure it with the splendour of a new life. . . . Sown in corruption it will be raised in incorruption. . . . Little indeed can we understand that inaccessibility to disease, that radiant beauty, that superiority to distance and material obstructions when moving about through space, that spirituality in short, which awaits but which will not destroy it."

What is the ground of this expectation? "According to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself." Phil. iii, 21.

Some practical consequences follow. (1) Respect for the body. It has a future and must be kept "in temperance, soberness and chastity." (2) It must be trained to fulfil its function as an adequate instrument of the spirit. (3) It must be presented a living sacrifice, in work and in that best of work, worship.

A *second* consideration arises respecting the body's function here and hereafter as a means of differentiating between individual and indi-

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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vidual. If in the Hereafter our personality is to remain distinct and distinguishable from God and we are to take our place as a unit within a vast community, will the body be the means by which we can be distinguished and recognisable?

This raises the further question as to whether the Hereafter Life is to be lived in Space. (See Streeter in "Immortality," *ad loc.*)

The resurrection of the Body in any case secures this, that each individual in the Hereafter will be able to be distinguished from the rest by a means which here is secured in his possession of a physical organism, through which he functions and by means of which he makes himself known to others and is distinguished from them. So the Resurrection Body is to be a perfect organism for the use of a Spirit destined for perfection.

Eternal Form shall still divide  
Eternal Self from all beside.

*Thirdly.* If provision is thus made for our hereafter life by the gift of a glorified body, it

## IMMORTALITY

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follows that in the mind of the Giver, God, is the thought of each one of us in the Hereafter life possessing a distinct and distinguishable Self, which will be able to express itself through, and function by means of, a spiritual body, in the same way that we are enabled here, under terrestrial conditions, to be distinguished from our fellow mortals. *There would be no need of separate spiritual bodies for each one of us if our final end were absorption into God.*

The Christian doctrine parts company therefore with the Greek idea of the immortality of the soul only, and the Eastern dream of a Pantheistic absorption into God with the loss of personal immortality.

*Fourthly.* The Resurrection of Christ is a revelation of a Union of the Human and the Divine in His Person which continues in and through the change we call Death. We have here "the pledge of an abiding communion of a Saviour with the fulness of our nature on earth and in heaven." What does this mean? Surely that the human in communion with the



## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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Divine, the Divine in union with the human, in our case as in His, survives death, and in the Hereafter is still a communion of the two, not an absorption of the one by the other. It involves the eternal character of a *relationship*. And a relationship is only possible where there are two, distinct and distinguishable.

*Fifthly.* The Incarnation and the issue in the Resurrection means that, as for the God-man, so for the man in God, the human will remain *human*. Our destiny is not to become something else. Men will not become gods. The human will become more truly human. That is to say that our communal life in the Body of Christ is to be that of men, not that of quasi-divine beings of a higher order, either here or hereafter. This secures for us the hope that much we love here in our intercourse one with another as human beings is not to be transmuted. Some have suggested that we make too much of our human ties and family bonds, thus losing sight of the wider brotherhood, and that our Lord's teaching was intended

## IMMORTALITY

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to point us to a better way. True we are warned that in the Resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the Angels, but that does not mean the abolition, we may well believe, of all family relationships, all human ties. We are not to be bereft of father, mother, brother, sister or related to them in some strange and unnatural way. The saints are human here and hereafter. They are our brethren, men and women. So they will be, and their communion with God will not destroy their communion one with another. The Church holds fast to the Communion of Saints as essentially a communion of human beings and believes that God will respect and hallow, not destroy, the ties which bind us one to another in Him.

### VI. *The Community of Finite Spirits.*

Since God is the God of all as well as of each, the destiny of the individual is bound up with that of the whole. Hence the twofold signifi-

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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cance of the kingdom here and hereafter as both a personal possession—a gift to each, and a social organism—a community for all. Spiritual self-realisation takes place within the Kingdom. The Christian hope is both personal and social.

“ It is a feature of Christianity that it represented the human goal as at once personal and social: the realisation of personal good in the Kingdom of heaven. This Kingdom, which is manifested in the world of sense and time, attains a partial realisation here, and points to the world to come for its completion. The single soul attains the fulfilment of its divine end in and through the society of redeemed souls, and the social consummation becomes in its turn an end for the individual. Through this true union of individual and social good the conception of the world Beyond is set in a relation to this world which is at once intimate, vital, and ethical. In and through his temporal duties and relations man is invited to move forward to the full realisation of his divine vocation

## IMMORTALITY

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as a citizen of the heavenly kingdom. The goal to which he strives is a personality completed and fulfilled, not submerged or absorbed. The ideal, though personal, is not selfish ; for the good sought is at once social and personal ; it is a transfigured personal life in a transfigured order.”<sup>1</sup>

Thus in the Christian view man is taught that, both in the terrestrial and in the supra-terrestrial spheres, life is found to consist of a “ sum of relationships,” and the growth and development of the individual is achieved not by isolation nor in a solitary state but in society, in full activity of life in relation to others, brethren of the one God and Father of us all.

We look for no lonely journey in the trackless paths of eternity, no isolated bliss of communion with God apart from others and devoid of human love. Our immortality is to be a social

<sup>1</sup> Prof. Galloway. “ Idea of Immortality,” p. 63. This book is one of the most searching and lucid contributions to the subject of Immortality, and deserves the careful study of all who are desirous of gauging the relative merits of the Christian contribution as against rival theories.

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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state. We are to renew friendships, form others, give and take, grow by companionship. The links which bind us here one to another are not to be severed but renewed on a higher plane. There will thus be room for social activity. Heaven is not to be a dull monotony of static contemplation. Within the social life of the Whole, each soul will find enough outlet for the expression of its needs and activities amidst a world of kindred spirits. Social intercourse will be on a higher plane and freed from those imperfections and limitations which tend here to mar and spoil our relationships one with another. Obligations of citizenship there will be in the Heavenly Kingdom and we are to learn here how best to reconcile the individual and the social claims, the interests of the person with the good of the State.

What ends then will individuals pursue and will these ends be mutually conflicting and incompatible?

Pantheism would obliterate the individual end in a larger whole. Mere Pluralism as such

## IMMORTALITY

---

would give us an infinity of ends and conflicting ideals.

“What guarantee can we have,” asks Prof. Ward, “on the basis of mere pluralism that the different ideals of the different centres may not prove incompatible?”

As Prof. Galloway points out, “For mere plurality as such does not contain the ground of its own unity.”

This of course is the old problem of the One and the Many.

The Christian contribution is to postulate, in the words of Prof. Galloway, that

“The multiplicity of finite centres forms a teleological whole of which the ultimate ground and final end is God. The coherence and unity of the many are assured when the teleological organisation of the units is established by their reference to God as living ground as well as controlling principle and end. An ethical God is the security for the harmonious working out of their destinies on the part of finite individuals. Neither in pantheism nor in

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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pluralism, but in genuine theism, is the best support to the hope of human immortality."

To sum up: According to these lines of thought, we have Eternal Life as a mode of being begun here in communion with God, growing and developing in and within the limitations of time and space, persisting through death, undergoing at death such a transformation as to constitute at once a new and glorified state of existence, yet preserving a continuity with the former state. The passage from the life under terrestrial to that under celestial conditions, from the natural to the spiritual, the temporal to the Eternal, is such as to conserve and not destroy everything essential and valued in the former, yet opening out the prospect of such a transformation as to make the latter in comparison as the perfect to the imperfect, the substance to the shadow, the whole to the part.

This conservation through death pertains not to any one part of man's complex being but to

## IMMORTALITY

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the whole man, so that he reaches the supra-mundane sphere not as a disembodied spirit, not unclothed but clothed upon, the same yet changed, preserving his identity throughout, and his communion with God in whom he is not lost but found.

Finally, man's Eternal Life whether here or hereafter is essentially life in a society, a Kingdom of the redeemed. It is no static contemplation of the Beatific Vision in a selfish exclusiveness and impassivity. It is a social life of intense activity in worship and service. It is the ideal of the family life. Precisely what forms the activity will take will depend upon a future revelation of the precise contents of the "Many Mansions." One thing is certain. It will not fall short of our purest and deepest expectations. It will transcend them.

### VII. *The Christian Contribution in the Light of recent Philosophical Speculation.*

We come now to the last and most difficult part of our subject, namely to enquire



## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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whether the results we have reached in our study of the Christian contribution to the conception of Eternal Life are in accordance with the best philosophical thought of our time.

Is this insistence upon the value and persistence of human personality, together with the thought of Heaven as a society of such relatively free finite human spirits, bound together in a communal life and finding their unity and end in God—is this cycle of ideas in direct opposition to the conclusions reached in other branches of study by other lines of argument?

This raises many problems with which we cannot deal adequately, but a few general observations may be made.

(1) And first, that Christianity has to steer a middle course between a rigid Monism and a too expansive Pluralism. The problem of the relation of the One to the Many, the question of the relation of finite substances to the Absolute, the issue between a monistic and pluralistic theory of the universe, these are

## IMMORTALITY

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questions upon which the philosophers' camps are acutely divided. It cannot be said that the conclusions reached are decisive against the Christian postulates.

There is much in Monistic theories which favours the Eastern dream of a pantheistic absorption as the goal of the finite spirit and little hope held out in these systems for the final persistence of individual centres of experience. There is far more room for the doctrine of personal immortality in Pluralism.

There is in our own time, however, a distinct reaction against the philosophy of Mr. Bradley. Not the least encouraging sign from the Christian standpoint has been the appearance of some recent Gifford Lectures, notably "The Idea of God," by Pringle-Pattison, "Moral Values and the Idea of God," by W. R. Sorley, and "God and Personality," by C. C. J. Webb. The importance of the position maintained by Prof. Pringle-Pattison has been recognised by the Aristotelian Society, and we have had two

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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Symposia quite lately: (1) "Life and Finite Individuality," (2) "Individual Minds and the Mind of God."

The strength of the arguments for the proposition that finite individuals possess a substantive and not an adjectival mode of being has been fully upheld by a series of thinkers occupying a position of great weight in philosophical circles to-day.

(2) The Christian doctrine of Personal Immortality takes sides definitely with those who reject a mere adjectival existence for human individuality and it finds support for this in the moral argument for Theism and the tendency to emphasise the concept of value. The Christian finds cold comfort in the contention of one recent writer, that "our ideals, in so far as they are countenanced by the laws of the universe, abide and energise for ever." The belief in God's Love for each individual soul, His personal interest in every single unit of finite experience, compels us to believe that in His sight every single individual life, so far as it reflects Himself in

## IMMORTALITY

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its ideals and ethical tendencies, is of infinite value. And more than this, its *values*, ethical and spiritual, have worth, not as abstractions or universalised entities divorced from finite personality, but because they are bound up with the inner life of an individual personal human being. They are *its* values, and their persistence therefore is bound up with the future of the person, as a distinct entity. "Values," in other words, "ethical" and "spiritual," are meaningless apart from and dissociated from the persons for whom they exist and whose they are.

Christianity rejects a belief in the survival value of values apart from the survival value of the personal subject in whose inner life such values inhere as an integral part of the human personality.

Just as sin and the sinner cannot be dissociated in the eyes of God, so goodness and a good man are inseparable. If it be said that these values are not contemplated in the end as abstractions, but are inherent in the character

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

---

of God and so conserved after the individual vanishes, we can only urge the contention that, so far as they have found a home within the life of any finite moral and spiritual centre of activity in a personal life, they are there in a setting which cannot be *replaced* or for which no substitute is adequate. They are *my* values as well as God's and I demand a persistence for myself as well as for them, if they are to mean anything for me or for Him in a larger hereafter. This demand is not mere egotism run mad but is based upon my belief that Omnipotent Love finds in *me* something of worth. Therefore I must be *real*.

(3) "Christ pleased not Himself."

Self-forgetfulness is the key to any higher becoming on the part of the individual. The true development from the individual to the person is along this line, the losing of one's life to find it again in a larger whole.

Thus when Christianity claims for the finite individual a *reality*, the thought is not of such a unit as an end in itself or as self-centred and

## IMMORTALITY

---

unrelated. The personality is at once something in germ and something to be achieved. It is real in order to become ideal. We do not claim permanence for the self we know at any given moment, except we think of that self at its truest and its best moment, not its worst, and think of it beyond that, as capable of an infinite development towards an *ideal* revealed in the truly human personality of the God-Man. Such an ideal is God's intention for each unit, and His belief in its possibility of attainment to the goal of so high a calling is one of the secrets of the transforming power of Christianity as a Creative force in the moulding and fashioning of human character. Jesus believed in men and His unshakable faith in the possibilities of human nature led Him to despair of none and give hope to all, even the most degraded and imperfect of the sons of men. A philosophy which deprecates human personality and has no faith in its possibilities may find it an incredible miracle to believe that the supreme end of the Absolute is to give rise to beings such as

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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we experience ourselves to be (of Prof. Bosanquet, "Life and Finite Individuality," p. 88). A Christian humility can appreciate the fine sense which would escape from the vivid consciousness of a personal unworthiness by seeking to take refuge in the thought that not us but our ideals will survive. Dr. Inge seems to have the same thought in mind when he says, "As we never remain the same for two days together, for which self do we desire everlasting continuance? For our last—the self with which we died? It is to be hoped not!" (Aristotelian Soc. Papers, Vol. xix, p. 284.)

In the eyes of the Absolute—supra-personal or impersonal—we can well believe that the unfinished but developing personality of a finite individual would have no intrinsic worth, but in the eyes of a Personal God of Love, not even the meanest of His creatures is devoid of some spark of good and some reflection of the Divine Image, however faint. And he judges of our abiding worth, not by what we are, but

## IMMORTALITY

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by what we shall be and what He believes He can yet make us.

All I could never be,  
All men ignored in me,  
*This* I was worth to God.

Christianity thus when faced by the problem of the One and the Many, the Relative and the Absolute, lifts the whole problem into the realm of Spirit and deals with ethical and spiritual values as these are centred in finite human personalities in relationship to a Personal God.

(4) What we must contend for is the existence of a distinct Christian Philosophy in rivalry, if you will, to other systems and one which must stand or fall on its own merits and its own intrinsic worth as the best solution of the problems which beset human thought.

In claiming for Christianity a distinctive Philosophy, we hold that we have a perfect right to make use of our own terms and phraseology and to refuse to express or attempt to express our thought in terms borrowed from rival systems and inadequate, as we think, to



## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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express the richness of content we claim to possess in our concepts.

Thus we reject the "Absolute" of philosophy, the adjectival and the relative, and substitute our own terms, the Personal God of religion and the finite human personality of religious experience.<sup>1</sup>

(5) What are the postulates for such a Christian Philosophy? The time is surely overdue for a clear statement of what are essential data for the defence of the distinctively Christian truths as against rival theories and systems. We may venture to outline one or two bearing more directly upon our subject—the question of human personality and its survival value—its personal immortality; the Kingdom of

<sup>1</sup> As Balfour has pointed out (in "Theism and Humanism"), the religious man understands God as "something more than an identity wherein all differences vanish or a Unity which includes but does not transcend the differences which somehow it holds in solution . . . a God whom men can love, to whom men can pray, who takes sides, who has purposes and preferences, whose attributes, however conceived, leave unimpaired the possibility of a personal relation between Himself and those whom He has created."

## IMMORTALITY

---

Heaven as a Realm of Ends or a Monadology and the Nature of God as Ultimate Reality.

Christianity is given as a Revelation and in terms which are concrete, definite and personal. Its interests are primarily practical. At first sight therefore it does not appear before us as a philosophical system, and its Founder did not speak to the men of His day in terms of the current philosophies of the Schools. None the less what He said and did, however unsystematic His teaching, if we care to scrutinise it and to develop its implications, does lead to a distinctive position and attitude in regard to the chief philosophical questions of that or any subsequent age.

What that position is may best be appreciated if we represent it as neither a thoroughgoing Monism nor a clear-cut Pluralism but as having points of contact with both and yet distinct and distinguishable from either. The Christian philosopher, *e.g.*, will be bound by neither the rigid Monism of Spinoza nor the more hopeful "Monadology" of Leibniz.

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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A full acceptance of its terms will lead to a position which however unstable is a *via media* between the two.

(6) We have as Christian philosophical postulates :—

(a) *God* ; as Personal Holy Love.

A Trinity in Unity and a Unity in Trinity. A community not a barren unit is the ultimate Reality.

(b) *Man* ; Human personality as a centre of ethical and spiritual activity is ultimately not adjectival nor a part of appearance but *real*.

(c) There is a relation between God and Man which whilst not identity of Essence postulates such an affinity as to render communion between the two the consummation of man's truest and deepest being. There can be no question of ethical relations with the Absolute. If we think of ourselves as parts of a Whole, we are thinking not of an ethical relationship between God and ourselves but of an ontological identity which is pure Pantheism.

The Relation is that which subsists between

## IMMORTALITY

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a Creator, a Personal Holy Loving God, and Man, God's Creation in love.

(d) Communion with God does not mean identification. A Creative act confers a relative independence. We are not phases of the Divine Life. God is the Ground of finite spirits but is not one Eternal Self in which they are contained, although He conditions their existence.

We reject McTaggart's thought of the Absolute eternally differentiating itself in finite centres, as subversive of the Christian Doctrine of the Divine Transcendence. God Himself is not part of His Creation. If "the Eternal Whole is the ultimate Reality and satisfaction of finite selves" this does not mean for the Christian an ultimate absorption. If "the truth of the finite is to be taken up into the infinite," this for the Christian means the preservation of his personality in a relationship with the Infinite such as is involved in God's Creative act.

We safeguard the Christian doctrine from all pantheistic systems by holding as equally vital truths the Divine Immanence and the Divine Transcendence. We cannot get outside of God

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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but He can get outside of us, and be outside the range of our finite experience. He must be first outside of us if we are to speak of Him as in any sense immanent in us. Transcendence and Immanence are correlative terms.

Our life in Him is capable of infinite development in fellowship, but His Transcendence secures our individuality in as much as He can never as "Deus Immanens" be mistaken for a part of His creation or identified in any ontological sense with it. "There is an immanence of the Divine in the human, which, though it eludes definition, is not identification." It is doubtful whether philosophy can ever take us beyond the thought of the Immanent God. Religious experience, however, holds within it a key which eludes philosophy as such.

(e) There is a real and *eternal* distinction between the Creator and the creature, a distinction which Christianity is concerned to preserve at all costs, whilst not pronouncing it absolute or of such a kind as to preclude relationship as against Deism.

This difference, moreover, is not one of

## IMMORTALITY

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*degree* only but of *kind*. We reject the thought that man partakes of the Divine Essence to a degree and in the end becomes Divine at the cost of the loss of his distinct individuality as a centre of activity over against God.

Prof. Bosanquet assures us that "the finite self, like everything else in the Universe, is now and here beyond escape an element in the Absolute."

There is a truth in this. "In Him we live and move and have our being." We cannot get outside God. But the Christian still uses the personal pronoun distinguishing self from God. "In Him, *we* live." In this he parts company with Dr. Bosanquet.

The Christian, moreover, escapes the opposite error of Pluralism which would regard each self as an exclusive entity, a windowless Monad. The Kingdom of God in such a system might well be a community of conflicting and mutually antagonistic ends, a wilderness of self-subsisting centres of activity in no sense organically but merely externally connected.

(f) Religion demands (1) full reality, Trans-

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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cendence and Immanence for God with a difference in *kind* between Himself as Creator and His Creation. (2) Quasi-reality, a relative independence conferred by the Divine Creator upon the human creature with a consequent relationship between God and man, conferring upon the latter an eternal, permanent yet derived existence which finds its truth not in identity of being but in affinity, kinship.

We claim for God a transcendence to which man can never attain, a totality of Being which whilst it includes the totality of finite human spirits is not that totality or limited by it.

The religious postulates are Transcendence and Immanence, and with these terms rather than with the philosophical concepts of Absolute and Relative, Appearance and Reality, the Christian strives to do justice to a religious revelation and experience which is found to work and survives a pragmatic test within the realm of personality, human and Divine, and the experienced relationship between the two which constitutes Eternal life in Time with the

## IMMORTALITY

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promise of a fuller experience of the same in life at a higher level and under conditions of the exact nature of which we are ignorant but which will not be so wholly unlike what we know here as to constitute a new mode of being in a new relationship to God.

In this relationship each human personality is a separately existing but depending entity, real so far as it goes and ever becoming more real as the result of its life lived in Communion with God. The act of creation secures for man a quasi-independence, an existence in its own right over against the Creator, and yet not absolutely so in as much as it is a conferred, derived, dependent and related, but none the less real and lasting existence.

Test this in the realm of the religious consciousness of the soul's communion with God. Man finds that in moments of deepest and most vital real and intimate communion with God he is not less but more himself. There is no annihilation, absorption or obsession of the human by the Divine but the expansion, elevation, purification of the former by the latter.



## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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The soul experiences the full realisation of itself as the result of its intensest communion with Another. In the life hid with Christ in God, the finite finds the truth of its existence in the Infinite but is not absorbed in the discovery. It retains its consciousness of the relationship, its awareness of its state, and its more intimate union with the Divine is its discovery of its own intrinsic worth in the eyes of Love Himself who discovers in it something worthy of His regard.<sup>1</sup>

This human personality, however, grows as the result of a life lived within a community and within, therefore, a network of relationships formed with other finite personalities constituting and conditioning its own development. We attain to the higher levels of the truly personal life only *within* and not outside the City of God. Our future destiny and End, therefore, is bound up with that of the Whole.

(g) The final End, when the Son Himself also shall be subject to Him that did put all

<sup>1</sup> On the relation of the Human and the Divine in the Person of Christ and in us, reference may be made to "A Study in Christology," Part II, where these points are substantiated.

## IMMORTALITY

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things under Him, that God may be all in all, is not the suppression of all the partially reals by their becoming one with the Whole, but a totality within a totality—a community of finite human spirits created for communion with God and finding the consummation of their being in a social life of infinitely varied relationships within a supreme relationship, soul with soul, soul with God.

Hence the thought of Creation and the concept of the final End are intimately and profoundly connected. God is revealed as the great Giver. From eternity to eternity He imparts Himself that others may live. Their end also is achieved by giving. They lose themselves in an act of supreme self-negation, the impulse in them of the same Divine Life with its imperious demand for self-donation. This loss of self is not annihilation but the rediscovery of the life at a higher level—the principle of dying to live is ceaselessly manifested within the Divine Community and this because its source is God Himself.

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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Thus we want to borrow from Bergson an illustration in order to refute its *pantheistic* implications and adapt it to a higher use.

“When a strong instinct assures the probability of personal survival,” says Bergson (“Creative Evolution,” p. 283 ff), “they are right not to close their ears to its voice ; but if there exist ‘souls’ capable of an independent life, whence do they come? When, how and why do they enter into this body which we see arise, quite naturally, from a mixed cell derived from the bodies of its two parents? All these questions will remain unanswered, a philosophy of intuition will be a negation of science, will be sooner or later swept away by science, if it does not resolve to see the life of the body just where it really is, on the road that leads to the life of the spirit. But it will then no longer have to do with definite living beings. Life as a whole, from the initial impulsion that thrust it into the world, will appear as a wave which rises, and which is opposed by the descending movement of matter. On the greater part of

## IMMORTALITY

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its surface, at different heights, the current is converted by matter into a vortex. At one point alone it passes freely, dragging with it the obstacle which will weigh on its progress but will not stop it. At this point is humanity ; it is our privileged situation. On the other hand, this rising wave is consciousness . . . the matter that it bears along with it, and in the interstices of which it inserts itself, alone can divide it into distinct individualities. On flows the current, running through human generations, subdividing itself into individuals. This subdivision was vaguely indicated in it, but could not have been made clear without matter. Thus souls are continually being created, which, nevertheless, in a certain sense pre-existed. They are nothing else than the little rills into which the great river of life divides itself, flowing through the body of humanity. . . .

“ All the living hold together, and all yield to the same tremendous push. The animal takes its stand on the plant, man bestrides

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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animality, and the whole of humanity, in space and in time, is one immense army galloping beside and before and behind each of us in an overwhelming charge able to beat down every resistance and clear the most formidable obstacles, perhaps even death."

It would be difficult, perhaps, to select a better passage than this summing-up, in Bergson's words, of the meaning of Evolution, to illustrate by contrast the distinctive teaching of Christianity.

In this passage we have an echo of the Greek contempt for matter, the thought of the body being carried by the soul as a weighty encumbrance, the suggestion of pre-existence, the suggestion of Life as the great Reality, and this, under the figure of a mighty river, implying impersonality for the Whole, even though individual souls exhibit for a time a higher reality in conscious life. None the less the clear implication is that we sink back into this river of life and are lost as the mist from the sea. There is the denial of personal immor-

## IMMORTALITY

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tality and the perdurance of finite individuality. We have the picture of Reality as a blind impersonal wave of life pushing on to no clearly defined goal, overcoming obstacles in a mad charge, seemingly for no ethical or spiritual end, but as the result of an inexplicable "initial impulsion" coming from nowhere and leading no whither. If it succeeds in overwhelming death itself, we may well ask—to what purpose? On flows the current but we shall not be conscious of the fact, nor will the river of life itself be aware of the victory it has won.

No, our Christian thought is on a higher level than this. The Divine Love of a Personal God is the motive of the "initial impulsion." Life indeed is the great Reality, but it is God's Life and it is poured forth in a mighty wave as the instinctive expression of Love's nature to give itself, to sacrifice itself in Creative activity. There are degrees of Reality. The life imparted to the vegetable and animal kingdoms is of one degree, the life which man is capable of receiving is life on a higher level. God is the source of all

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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life, but to man alone, as a finite centre of free ethical and spiritual activity, has been granted the privilege of tasting of God's Life in a fuller degree and on a higher plane. The purpose of Divine Love has been to pour forth Himself as a mighty wave into the sum of finite existence created by Himself to reflect, in varying degree, His perfection. In and through finite human personality, God has striven and still is striving to reflect His Glory. Souls are created for a purpose—to share God's Life—and so far as they are willing to do this—to make a free response to His Divine Love—they become finite centres of creative activity, seen in the world as lights reflecting the Glory of God and finding the truth and perfection of their being in an active fellowship one with another in Him who is their Life and their Light. Their end is not to be extinguished as their beginning was not without purpose. They are necessary to the fulness of God's Self-expression. More and more adequately does He find expression in them so far as they

## IMMORTALITY

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are surrendered lives, able thus to be fashioned anew by Him after the Divine Image. Inasmuch, however, as no single finite human personality can ever fully reveal God, there is the necessity for an infinite variety of finite spirits, a community, a commonwealth, if justice is to be done to Love's desire to reproduce Himself. The Divine Life will find, if not full, at least adequate expression within this community of spirits—each individual spirit reflecting from its particular angle one ray of the Divine Glory—no two centres reflecting in identically the same way the same Glory—hence the whole Glory never fully seen in any one reflection but needing the whole for its adequate expression. Hence also each individual soul has its contribution to make to the great task set before us, which is the purpose of our being—to satisfy God's desire to see Himself. Even the meanest amongst the sons of men has a contribution to make, and this contribution is not something external to himself but is himself—not as he is, but as he is capable of becoming,



## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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not his false self marred by sin, but his true self redeemed by his Saviour.

Shall God find in a redeemed humanity—a universe of souls—an adequate expression of Himself? The answer is that His full Glory must ever transcend the creature's fullest capacity to reflect Him, but that within the limits of the human, God is striving to this end, that He may yet see in us such a reflection of Himself as shall satisfy Love's desire to create, to produce. Surely this is to postulate a goal and end for redeemed humanity worthy of the Divine Love. If this is His Eternal Purpose for you and for me it gives a dignity to our human nature, a purpose to our life, a meaning to all those strivings and strugglings after a higher becoming which we know too well in the conflict we wage against sin, the world and the devil. We have the assurance that in every effort we make to struggle up to the higher levels of life and to overcome the evil in us, we have God on our side not as Omnipotent Passivity but as Dynamic Activity, the activity

## IMMORTALITY

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of a tireless, patient, Creative Love, content to suffer, to agonise, to travail in us and with us, if only in the end it may make of us really what it discerns in us ideally, viz. a new creature. Death cannot frustrate, so we dare to believe, such a Divine purpose as this. Love triumphant is God's last word. Life Everlasting His final End for Man. The "initial impulsions" is for the Christian no blind force on a purposeless errand, be it constructive or destructive. There was and is a Person behind it and Love was and is His motive. Some day then we shall see the End, and Faith is strong to say this much: "When I wake up after Thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it." Then indeed will our Divine Creator survey again His Work made and remade, created and redeemed, and behold! it shall be very good. Toward that consummation Christianity bids us move. For its achievement God bids us work. Fellow-labourers with Him we have the assurance that our labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Finally, I should like, if you will allow me, to

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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drop for a moment the cold passivity of a lecturer's attitude and speak with something of the warmth of personal conviction. If we seek by intellect alone to gauge the certainty of a life hereafter, the quest halts at a bare probability. We must wait and see.

Bergson and Croce, however, have taught us the illegitimacy of exalting the logical judgment into an absolute criterion whilst we possess two other criteria—the æsthetic and the moral—both of which have equally valid claims, and are not merely subjective and relative. Reality can only be known by an activity of our whole personality which is not the exclusive exercise of any one faculty. Moreover it expresses itself in an act which is essentially living experience, not reflection upon it.<sup>1</sup>

We have within us another criterion of judgment other than the logical. Whilst intellect halts on the brink of uncertainty, instinct leaps

Cf. Bergson, "Creative Evolution," p. 174. "The intellect is characterized by a natural inability to comprehend life. Instinct, on the contrary, is moulded on the very form of life. While intelligence treats everything mechanically, instinct proceeds, so to speak, organically."

## IMMORTALITY

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to the truth and human love answers with an Eternal "Yea" the everlasting "No" of our fears and doubts.

Let me quote two short poems taken from a helpful volume by W. Robertson Nicoll on "Reunion in Eternity." The first gives us the intellectual doubt and ends with the "wait and see" policy of rational activity; the second lifts the subject into the realm of personal relationship and love's instinct which o'erleaps the barriers of cold logic and learns the truth by living it.

I cannot know ; there is no man who knows.  
We are, and we are not,—and that is all  
The knowledge which to any may befall ;  
We know not life's beginning, nor life's close,—  
"Twixt dawn and twilight shine the sunny hours  
Wherein some hands pluck thorns and some hands  
flowers ;

"Twixt light and shade are shed the sudden showers ;  
Yet night shall cover earth as with a pall.

Alas, poor song, all singing is in vain ;  
What thing more sad is left for thee to say ?  
Oh, weary time of life, and weary way,  
Can dead souls rise, or lost joys live again ?  
Now by the hand of sorrow are we led ;  
Though sweet things come, they come as joys born dead:  
Let us arise, go hence, for all is said,  
And we must bide the breaking of the day.

(P. B. Marston. From his poem "In Grief.")

## THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION

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So far the intellectual verdict.

The second is taken from "Ion," Act V., scene 2 (T. N. Talfourd).

Clemanthe asks Ion, on verge of his death :—

"And shall we never see each other?"

Ion replies, after a pause :

"Yes !

I have ask'd that dreadful question of the hills

That look eternal ; of the flowing streams

That lucid flow for ever ; of the stars,

Amid whose fields of azure my raised spirit

Hath trod in glory : All were dumb, but now

While I thus gaze upon thy living face,

I feel the love that kindles through its beauty

Can never wholly perish ; we *shall* meet

Again, Clemanthe !"

This is Love's verdict and the truth of it is confirmed by another Scene in a Garden twenty centuries ago when a familiar voice that was still spake again : "Mary !" . . . . .  
"Rabboni ! Master !"











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